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- Living with a Modena ■ Sealey's trade profile ■ Lambretta tuning history Part 3
- Dave Bristow BSSO interview ■ *Classic Scooterist* Scene ■ Send Us a Postcard
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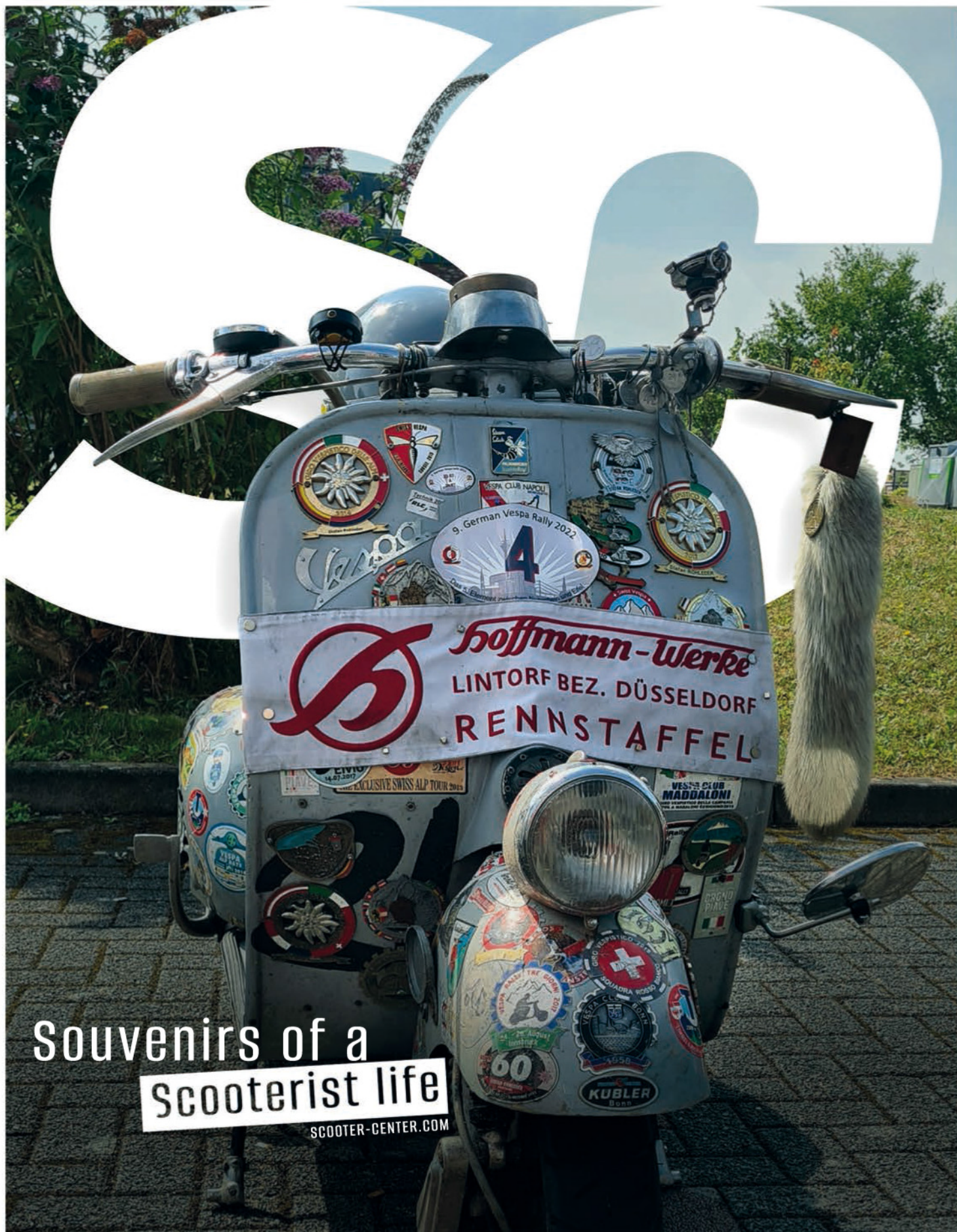
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No.44
March 2023

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scooterist life

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Outside influences

Has an outsider answered a question that seems impossible for scooterists to resolve?

Recently I had a brew with the editor of a classic motorcycle magazine, and saw the opportunity for a bit of fun. If you follow the motorcycle press you may have noticed that an Indian company has purchased the rights to use the BSA and Gold Star brands. Recently the company has launched its interpretation of what the iconic Gold Star would look like had BSA continued production. Does that sound familiar?

With a sense of mischief, I asked how the 'Goldie' launch had gone down with his readers but the reaction wasn't what I expected. "They think it's okay," he began. "It's not a Gold Star; liquid cooled for starters, but it has the look and is much easier to live with. A lot of my readers are getting on, if they misjudge kick-starting a Goldie it'll break their leg. For a spot of reliable fun and getting the wind in your face it'll do the job. Might even cause some interest in classics among younger riders."

Having almost choked on my Rich Tea I explained the ongoing debate among scooterists about modern 'retro' scooters and how their reaction, often, wasn't quite so tolerant as his readers were of the new Goldie. "Of course it isn't," he replied. "My lot don't have a shared culture. There's marque rivalry, but the classic and modern bike scenes have very little overlap, so there's no cause for friction. Your lot attend the same events and share a common lifestyle, of course there's going to be strong opinions. This is the only new bike Goldie fans have seen in almost 60

years, scooterists are constantly faced with change. Without splitting up the scene they can't avoid it, and that's unsettling."

Has my colleague stumbled on the roots of classic vs auto animosity? Perhaps, but there are other views too; have a look at Stu Owen's column, take a peek at this month's Mailbox and let me know what you think.

stan@scootering.com

This month

We've a real mixed bag for you this month. At one end of the spectrum there's the incredible Bruce Lee – one of the very few, new, 'full blown' custom scooters to hit the circuit in a long time. At the other extreme I continue our look at budget scooters by recalling my time as the custodian of a Modena. If that doesn't raise enough eyebrows our Lexicon features the unsung but innovative Durkopp Diana. Elsewhere we continue our PX maintenance series by commencing the engine strip, Stu Owen launches a series profiling a legendary Mancunian scooter racer and Sarge starts our profile of 'rally bands' by chatting with Smoove & Turrell. Oh, and we've a genuine 'fire breathing' dragon; March's *Scootering's* certainly varied.



Next month: on sale Thursday, March 23

Very few people have a neutral opinion on the Vega but it's a scooter that deserves to be better understood. In April's issue we explore its history, take Cambridge Lambretta's tuned version for a spin and introduce a truly mind-blowing custom Lui from Venice. Vespisti shouldn't feel abandoned though, our cover star PX truly is a 'Marvel,' and our man in Europe continues southwards on his GTS. The rally season is almost upon us and we feature Stu Smith's exclusive interview with Motown legend Tommy Hunt ahead of his scheduled appearance at WoT later in the year. Add in the usual news, views, history and reviews and you'll see that there's never been a better time to subscribe. We've a packed 2023 ahead and you won't want to miss a word.



To pre-order your next issue of *Scootering*, head to
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CONTENTS =

- 03 Editorial**
Has Stan discovered the reason for auto and 2t rivalry?
- 06 Kickstart**
News, reviews and a farewell or two
- 19 Book Club**
Art Attack: If graffiti's your thing we've got just the book for you
- 20 Small frame– big change**
Rik takes a look at Pinasco's electric conversion with a twist
- 22 Air wear**
The lowdown on air bags, don't high-side without one
- 25 How to train your dragon**
A fire breathing, wing flapping Lammy
- 28 Crossing continents**
The first instalment of an epic trip by Vespa GTS
- 32 Lexicon of Scooters #15**
This month we turn our attention to the underrated but innovative Durkopp Diana
- 42 A quick one with Smoove**
Sarge catches up with the northern funksters ahead of their appearance at Scarborough's National
- 47 Mailbox**
When is a scooter not a scooter? When it's in Mailbox apparently...
- 48 Show Us Your Scoots**
Looking back on good times, looking forward to great times
- 50 Subscriptions**
With all we've got planned for this year you won't want to miss a single issue. Guarantee your copy by subscribing and save money too
- 52 Send Us a Postcard**
A very special postcard from the Indonesian Scooter Festival; we guarantee it's like nothing you've ever seen before
- 56 Budget Scootering**
Love them or hate them, there's no disputing the Modena's budget credentials. But what's it like to live with one?
- 60 Bruce Lee – full on**
Is the full-blown custom scooter a thing of the past? Not if this luscious Lambretta's anything to go by...



- 68 From a Cub to a Lyon**
Stu Owen chronicles the life of legendary Mancunian racer Chris Forster
- 72 Vespa V200 RS**
A Porsche inspired, Quattrini powered pocket rocket
- 77 Win with Sealey's**
A workshop seat can transform your garage forever and this month you could win one for free
- 78 Socket to them**
Sealey's is one of Europe's largest tool suppliers. We paid a visit to the company's home in Bury St Edmunds
- 83 This month in the garage**
Dan explains why timing is everything and uncovers a masterpiece from the past
- 87 Sow's Ear to Silk Purse Part 2**
We continue our PX maintenance guide by starting the engine strip
- 90 Roll out the barrels: Lambretta tuning through the ages, Part 4**
This month Stu Owen recalls the battle of the barrels
- 99 Race Chat**
This month Paul Green chats with a man who wears more hats than many, Team Hornet boss Dave Bristow
- 103 Classic Scooterist**
Mau delves into the world of classic scootering



72



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60

Memories of Fred Willingham

We've had many tributes to the late Fred Willingham.

Perhaps the one which sums him up best comes from his old friend and fellow racer, Christine Jackson:

I first met Fred at Snetterton circa 1964. We would chat at various events up and down the country. I really got to know him after I took a job in Bradford in 1970; Fred was working as a weights and measures officer. While designing, building and sprinting his recording-breaking Lambretta, I went with Fred to several events in and around Yorkshire, and at some, I competed on his bike; great fun. Fred was always so organised and on time, with nothing left behind; his mum often would make a picnic for us. He had made a substantial set of rollers used to start many of the bikes at the sprint meetings along with his team-mate Peter Ham, and sometimes, they would even run the timing equipment.

I worked with children and young people in pretty unconventional settings at the time and on one occasion I had a phone call from the head of Adult Education for Bradford and District requesting help. A group of teenage boys were terrorising an adult education centre based in a school outside the city. The boys rode bikes



around the school grounds and through the corridors, scaring the grown-ups who were in class. The plea was simple: could I do something? So I met the boys informally on site. They were angry and upset, it had been their school and now there was nothing for them, and I understood their point. It was clear that they were keen on bikes, so I asked Fred if he would work with me to make a

change for the boys.

Fred agreed, and off we went. We took some 8mm films to show them, but he never boasted about his immense talent and ability. He designed and made many of the parts of his bike at an engineering evening class and armed with tools, parts, transfers and stickers, we talked with the boys. Finally, one evening, Fred arrived with his bike, and they were amazed to discover

that we had both broken world speed records and that Fred was still a world record holder; he even allowed them to sit on the bike. Peace and harmony had returned to the centre, and Fred was, of course, magnificent. We ran the group for the winter term and then introduced the boys to bike clubs; from then on, there were no more problems at the centre.

Christine Jackson



LEGAL Q&A

This information is provided by Stephen Hattersley, of WildWood Legal, a firm of solicitors specialising in claims for injured scooterists. Stephen, a qualified solicitor for 25 years, has been riding scooters for more than 30 years and has acted for injured riders across the UK. He knows the tricks and pitfalls that insurers use and pulls no punches in his dealings with them. He rides to work every day and understands the challenges you face out there.



WildWood Legal

Q. My solicitor is bringing a claim for me after a clown knocked me off my scooter. I'm not going to be able to work for at least six months, probably more. I'm worried about how I am going to pay the bills in the

meantime. Is there anything that can be done?

A. Sorry to hear it. The good news is that your solicitor might be able to apply for what is called an interim payment for

you. This is effectively the first instalment of your compensation and will form part of the overall amount which you will receive. To get one, there will need to have been an admission of liability from the insurers acting

for the defendant and you may need to produce some evidence of your losses but if you can tick these boxes, your solicitor should then be able to get an interim payment for you to help you with the bills.

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Farewell Russell Dear

I am writing with some sad news which we as a club would be grateful if you could share in *Scootering*. Russell Dear, our club president and one of our founding members, passed away on January 3. Russell had been involved with the scooter scene since the 80s and was one of those lads that kept at it, never a year went by that he didn't attend rallies or have scoots. Originally from Ellon in north-east Scotland, Russell did spend some years living in London. He was well known both locally

and nationally, and things are going to be very strange without him around. (Although the club runs will probably now leave on time!)

He loved his music and was particularly fond of Ska as could be seen by his rude boy tattoos. His funeral was held on February 3, when he was accompanied on his last journey by members of the club and scootering friends from the area and beyond. We miss you Russell, ride free.

Keith Chalmers, Ythan SC



Casting call at Uni-Auto

It was back in April 2022 that we published photographs taken by Manish Mittal of Uni-Auto inside the Scooters India Factory at Lucknow just before it closed for good. Although it's well known that much of the tooling was too worn out to be of use, there were exceptions and Uni-Auto is currently in the process of commissioning 'test shots' ahead of the first production runs.

Among the moulds secured by Uni-Auto are those for horncast grilles, air scoops, air filter box elbows and carb manifolds, but it will probably be the GP headset that causes most interest. Before restorers of Italian machines get too excited the casting is of the later, Indian, type and therefore



unsuitable for concours restorations. However, for owners of Indian machines or those who simply want to keep a GP on the road (or racetrack) the thought of once again being able to order a matching GP headset top and

bottom that's been cast to factory specifications straight from dealer's stock will be an exciting prospect.

We must stress that the images show preproduction samples, while prices and production dates are still to be confirmed.

King of Cool

While open-faced lids aren't everyone's cup of tea, this recent release from Bell is a scheme that's crying out to be translated into a custom scooter.

This year Bell is proud to announce a partnership with the Steve McQueen Estate to launch a series of helmets and apparel paying homage to the original King of Cool. The first helmet in the series is a Custom 500 Six Day McQueen, a period-correct replica of the helmet McQueen wore while competing in the 1964 International Six Day Trial off-road race.

This Steve McQueen replica Custom 500 comes in a beautiful blue and white paint scheme, with subtle red accents just like the helmet McQueen wore during the competition. 'Steve' is written in a playful font on the back of the helmet, adding a unique touch along with a period-correct 510 visor. The helmet will also feature a special 278 decal



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Clean words

A Government minister has pledged not to adopt a 'one size fits all' approach when phasing out motorbikes that need longer to transition.

Addressing the Motorcycle Industry Association's (MCIA) annual conference in front of global manufacturers and senior industry representatives, the Minister for Transport Decarbonisation and Technology, Jesse Norman, promised to look closely at the situation.

Despite emphasising the importance of cutting carbon emissions as a "great driver of change" and promising a response to the phase out consultation on the sales of new non-zero emission vehicles in the 'L-Category' (basically industry speak for petrol engined motorcycles) "in due course", the minister promised to continue listening to industry.

Recognising L-Category vehicles' environmental, congestion and air quality benefits, the minister went on to acknowledge the diversity of L-Category vehicles, with each one offering something different to the public and the economy, whether "touring down to Turo on a high-powered motorcycle or nipping round the streets of Nuneaton on a moped".



Scooters, problem or solution?

Commenting on the speech, Tony Campbell, CEO of MCIA, said: "In this first of its kind MCIA annual conference, we're delighted by the support shown by the minister.

"The association and industry at large have made monumental strides in the last five years in getting our essential sector recognised as an instrumental form of transport, not only in helping realise the Government's environmental ambitions, but its future of transport ambitions too.

"The conceiving and implementation of the joint

Action Plan is a testament to the latter and our strong collaborative working relationship, both of which we will continue to deliver on in 2023.

"We remain committed to working with the Government to ensure the most appropriate and fair approach is taken to transitioning our vehicles to zero emissions and in a way that is proportionate to vehicle size and emissions and that does not negatively impact our sector."

While all that sounds very positive, the Government is still committed to eliminating

the sale of small 'non-zero emission L-class vehicles' by 2030, and larger motorcycles by 2035. Notably it hasn't yet responded to the recent public consultation. It must be stressed that the 2030 date applies to sales of NEW vehicles, but industry figures are expressing doubts about the practicalities of developing viable technology, particularly for larger motorcycles, in such a short period.

If that is the case, the fact that the Government appears to be engaging with industry on this subject must be viewed with cautious optimism.

Fresh boots

Changing tyre brand is a leap of faith for most scooterists and we're no exception. With supply chain issues affecting supplies of our long-term favourites we've decided to go off-piste and fit a set of Kenda's Kozmic 6022. This isn't our first flirtation with the brand, our Project Pandemic T5 received a pair, but despite good first impressions we failed to rack up any meaningful mileage on them before the T5 found a new home.

The Kozmic has a dual compound construction that combines a durable centre section with softer shoulder zones that offer increased confidence when cornering, while the tread pattern is specially designed to improve water evacuation from around the contact patch. The Kozmic is available in a variety of sizes from 3.50x10 to 130/70-12, with prices starting at under £50.

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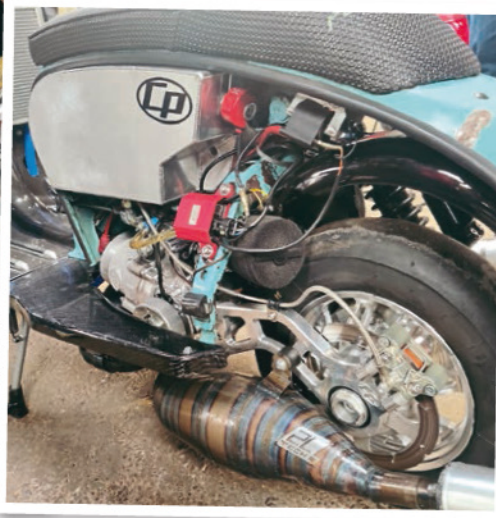
Scooterists and scooter tuners have never been afraid to push the boundaries of what their machines are capable of. This month Paul ponders on the marvel that is Casa's new twin.

Unless you've been hiding under a rock for the last few months you can't have failed to notice all the attention that the Casa Lambretta 76hp twin has been receiving. If you've watched any video of the engine running, or you were at the recent Newark show, then your ears will more than likely still be bleeding from having been blasted with the MOST amazing sounds!

Undoubtedly the engine is simply a masterpiece of engineering. It is just amazing, no arguments. But it's also proving to be divisive: too expensive, too powerful, too fast, impractical, pointless, unfinished, won't go around bends, not really a scooter engine, ridiculous. Then: amazing, crazy, bonkers, technically brilliant, super engineered. I've heard all of those descriptions in the last few weeks.

Let's start with the engineering. It's technology gone crazy with an incredible mix of modern engineering, 3D modelling, CNC and CAD. They've all been utilised to create this mental machine. It's definitely more than a concept as it's up and running, it can also (sort of) fit into a panelled chassis. However, realistically, the unit that's been displayed must still be classed as a prototype.

Yes, it is running and there is video of it on the road pulling wheelies in every gear with brutal power delivery – but is it too much? Certainly in the wrong (unskilled) hands it's potentially a taxi to the mortuary and it could certainly get you there quickly. It would be very tricky to ride on a winding road, especially on a left-hand bend, but this clearance issue is being worked on.



We know that fitting motorcycle engines into a scooter chassis is technically demanding and while for some that's a marvellous thing to do, for others such conversions receive little more than a shrug and a shake of the head.

But this is not a Japanese bike motor, it has been created from within the scooter community, and you can't argue that Casa Lambretta is an enthusiast-owned company. This crazy motor fits into a standard frame and even retains the factory rear suspension set-up, yet has so much technology and trick engineering even motorcycle legend Carl Fogarty has been studying every jaw-dropping detail. And it is jaw dropping.

The engineering prowess and work involved to do this has taken so much skill and is obviously the result of applying very modern and even futuristic technology to push the envelope of engine development. The clever use of two existing kart racing barrels has saved a lot of development work; just as importantly, they sound soooooo good!

Would I like to ride one? You bet! Would

I be capable of using all of its potential? Honestly? No. It would need a rider with incredible skills to hustle it around a race track, but I would love to see the likes of Darren Conneely, Stuart Day or Mikey Bonnett put it through its paces.

In its current form the engine isn't necessarily so fast as you may think in terms of ultimate speed but with some gearing and set-up changes it's more than capable of setting new benchmarks. I'd definitely like to see its top speed over a flying mile.

So far as British scooter sport's concerned it wouldn't fit in any of the current championship classes which have been carefully written in a way that allows development but remains true to 'scooter engines'.

No one wanted a skidoo engine being grafted into a scooter really!

This kind of technical development is obviously expensive and while there is a definite market the number of potential purchasers is limited.

That said, if any scooterists win the lottery I can imagine they would be straight on a flight to Casa.

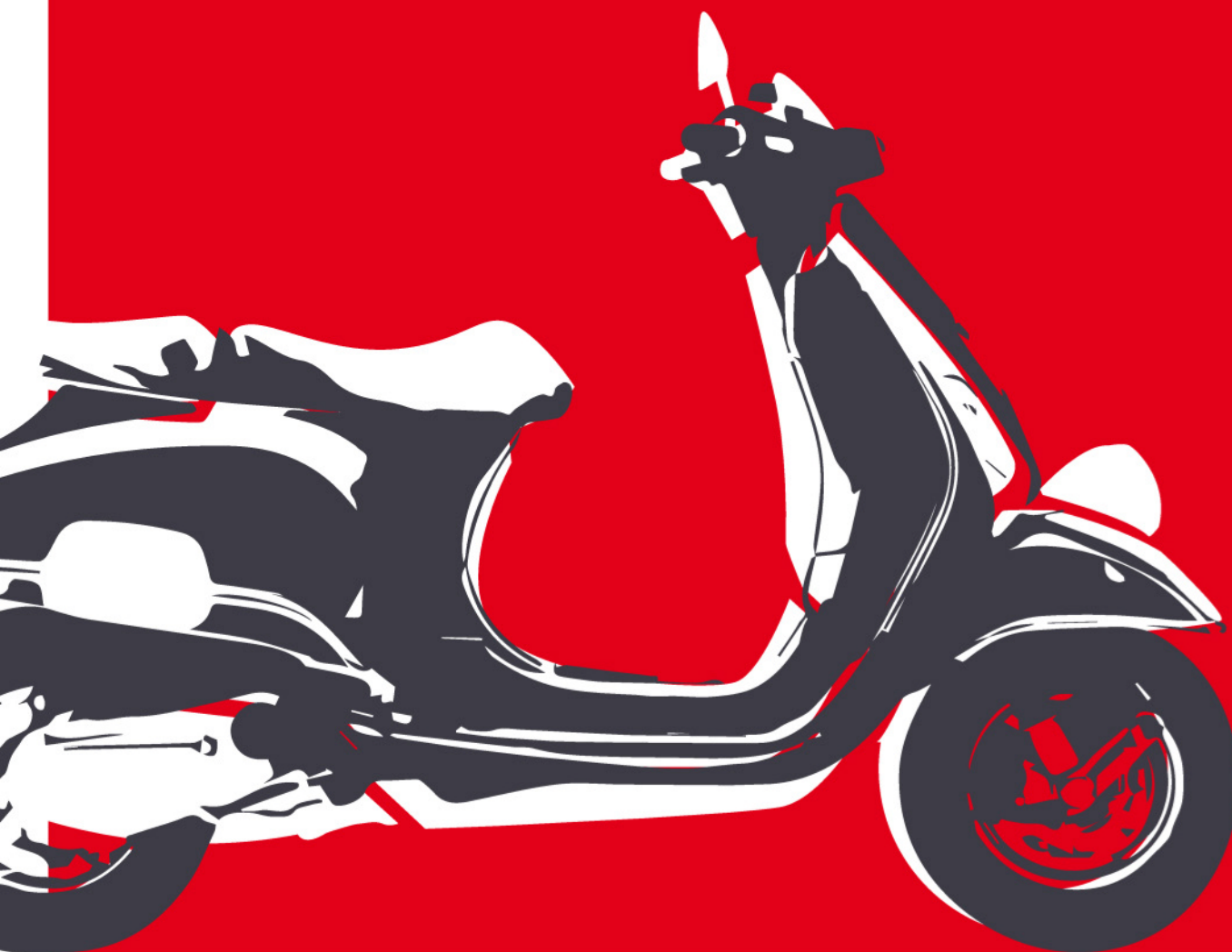
So my thoughts on the twin? Wow, simply wow. Impractical, crazy, mental. But I want one! I wonder if I could make it fit in a Royal Alloy frame? Where's my tape measure?

“ Would I like to ride one? You bet!
Would I be capable of using all of its
potential? Honestly? No. ”

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Stu Owen



Taking a breather

After the fast-paced environment of the 1980s, the scooter scene had to reinvent itself in the 1990s. Are we facing the same challenges today?

1990s custom shows featured standard scooters, just one example of how the scene had changed from the previous decade.



During the 1980s the scooter scene evolved at a ferocious pace, changing direction almost weekly. There was no chance to take time out, such was the speed that everything happened, but it couldn't stay that way forever. The questions were: how would it evolve, and would the scene burn itself out?

It was only while doing some research on the late 80s scooter scene that I fully appreciated the amount of change that was happening within the scene. More so that it was something we very rarely thought about or mentioned at the time. As the new decade approached there was great uncertainty about the future of scootering. These changes didn't happen overnight, and to be honest, most scooterists didn't seem bothered or even notice what was going on, but change can creep up on you.

The biggest influence on the scene was that everyone was getting older, and the carefree attitude of the 1980s was tempered by the responsibilities of buying houses, building careers and starting families. Suddenly scooter rallies weren't so appealing – not from an entertainment point of view but there were other demands on finances and it was no longer possible to afford every rally. Looking back, that was one of the first things I noticed: the numbers were slightly down. At first it was barely noticeable but as time passed there was a notable decline; even the most popular venues had lost their edge.

There were, of course, other factors and some people simply became bored with the scene. The massive revival of the Beetle car and events like 'Bugjam' offered a new direction, and many scooterists went down that route. Attitudes to music changed, and please don't shoot me, but Northern Soul had become a bit tiresome. New trends in music took over, which weren't always accepted by the more traditional scooterists. However, rally organisers had to move with the times and cater for the new sounds. Some didn't like it, and for a while, it looked as though rallies would split, with the old and new camps failing to mix.

Also factoring into this change was the attitude of scooterists, all of whom had gone through a massive revolution during the 1980s. Great custom machines were still being built but not in the same volume, and there were reasons for this. Finding a new style was difficult as it seemed that virtually everything had been done. Most of the paintwork, chroming, engraving and engineering had been seen in the 1980s, and while new custom machines were stunning, no new ground was being broken. It was the same with the engines, as tuning was happening at a slower pace than the 'Stage Six' fashion of a few years previous. A lot of the tuning development took place on the race track, but as the 1990s got under way, some big names called it a day and the grid shrank with each season.

This all led to a decrease in demand and that was of course a big concern for the dealers, many of whom had only experienced the boom years. The established dealers were concerned that there might not be enough work to go around, but others, who had joined the party late, didn't stay long as it became difficult for them to remain a viable business. Panic set in as shops closed, with owners getting out before it was too late and they ran into debt. For the first time that famous saying, "It's only got a few years left," was on the tip of everyone's tongue and the doom-mongers stepped in.

Just when everything seemed to be coming to an end, like always, the scooter scene reinvented itself and bounced back even stronger. The Britpop revolution certainly helped, and a new generation of Mods, slightly removed from the past, helped fuel its recovery. Many of those that had drifted away realised that the grass wasn't greener on the other side of

the fence, and they began to return. Suddenly, the scene became vibrant again and with its batteries recharged, scootering once again became fun.

It was never going to be how it was in the 1980s, and everything in life must evolve; otherwise, it becomes stale, and perhaps that's what happened here. Rallies began to change, no more did they have to be held at a seaside resort. VFM had shaken them up, catering to what scooterists wanted, whatever their tastes. Organisers realised it wasn't just the location but what was being offered at the venue and weren't scared to make changes if necessary. It gave the scooterists something new, somewhere different to go and do, which increased the numbers that attended.

The rest of the scene followed, and there was no doubt that as the year 2000 approached, it was strong enough to avoid any dip in interest. Looking back, the early 1990s was a much-needed wake-up call, even if those within didn't realise it at the time.

Now, three decades later, we face similar challenges; scooters are changing and money is becoming increasingly tight. The doom-mongers are still saying that "It's only got a few years left," and there's little doubt that there are hard times ahead. However, experience shows that scooterists are an adaptable bunch. Just as we now look back on the 1990s and wonder what the fuss was all about, I hope that in 30 years' time the next generation of scooterists, whatever they look like, will reflect on the 2020s with the same degree of fondness.



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Tanking along

If something sounds too good to be true then it's probably aimed at novice scooter tuners...

The problem with tuning a Lambretta was that after a few days of riding it, the improvement seemed to fade. A lot of it was down to whether the increase in performance gained was real, or imagined. Many a time, it was the extra noise, such as fitting a louder exhaust, which made the scooter feel faster, when in fact it wasn't. We all got used to bluffing our way around this, hiding the disappointment we'd been conned. We were all trying to make the damn things go faster, but a distinct lack of knowledge didn't make the process easy.

Much of it was down to the local scooter shop being eager to extract money from gullible teenagers by mis-selling them shiny new tuning products. Extraordinary claims of lightning acceleration or unbelievable speed would lure us in, only to be deflated once the crappy part was fitted with no gain in performance. Our garages were littered with things that had been discarded after a few miles of use, ornamental reminders of our lack of tuning knowledge. Having grown fed up with being part of the 'being duped by buying scooter crap' club for far too long, I was trying to break away by thinking more logically about how to tune a Lambretta.

Part of that process was boring the cylinder to 225cc; this had been a popular conversion since the 1960s. Add in a bit of port polishing, pop on an expansion pipe, and you were almost there. Or so I was led to believe by the few tuning articles I could read up on. The final ingredient for getting up to warp speed was the carburettor – and the simple philosophy that the bigger it is, the faster it will go. In technical terms this could be translated into 'I'm sorry, I haven't a clue

what I'm talking about'. Getting hold of a big Dell'Orto carburettor was pretty easy, and the simple bolt-it-on method took minutes to achieve.

There was the small matter of jetting the carb correctly, but that required some knowledge and the jets with which to do it. Neither existed, so it was ignored, relying instead on heavily leaded four-star petrol to prevent the thing from seizing. It was a dangerous game to play, and the odd piston lock-up was accepted as standard practice; in fact I'd feel blessed if it didn't happen. Nevertheless, this engine set-up seemed the way to go, and if I could overtake the others in the club that was the best indication of a set-up that was somewhere near right.

However, there was always room for improvement and it didn't matter how unlikely the component was, if it was rumoured to give some extra performance I'd be on it like a rash. One day I came across something no one else in the club had used before: fuel injection. This was usually associated with cars, and Ford was the king of marketing it, with the magic letter 'i' added to its Fiesta and Escort models. The chance find came through sorting through a pile of junk at the local motorcycle breakers. Rummaging through a box of bits, it stood out like a jewel with an inscription on its main body, 'Jet Speed'. It sounded too good to turn down and, yet again, I'd been lured in by an impressive name.

That didn't matter though, because now I'd have the only scooter in town with anything like it, even if there was no plan to make it work. This wasn't one of Ford's cast-offs; no, this was the Mark II version of the infamous Wal Phillips fuel injector. The original had emerged in the 1960s, was commonly advertised and, as usual,

made all the bold claims associated with such a product. While no one doubted its performance, the process of setting them up was impossible, and scooter owners across the land would warn the uninitiated to stay away from the troublesome device. I knew this but my new purchase was the Mark II and therefore had to be much more refined. I reasoned that the warnings weren't applicable and setting it up wouldn't be a problem.

How wrong could I be? With no instructions and zero information on the injector, it just resembled a piece of metal. It was a massive beast of a thing with a 38mm bore but, as luck would have it, fitted straight on to the rubber mount manifold, albeit a tight squeeze. It was a strange-looking thing, with a jet sticking out of the side to which the petrol tap directly connected, meaning no float bowl. The implication of this was that once the fuel tap was turned on, petrol flowed directly into the injector. However, if the engine wasn't running, fuel would simply pour on to the floor. From this it can be judged that a Wal Phillips fuel-injected scooter was not the safest method of transport.

The 'solution' to this hazard was to turn the tap on slightly and then quickly kick the engine over; in theory this meant that the fuel went into the engine and not on to the floor. It seemed like a lot of pissing around but if that's what it took to extract more fuel, then so be it. Now that I'd devised some Heath Robinson method on how to run it, all that remained was to see if the thing lived up to its 'Jet Speed' name. To my delight it did. Finally I'd found a bolt-on extra that lived up to its hype; in fact the performance was unbelievable, with rocket-like acceleration. Unfortunately that wasn't the only link to the space race, it burned as much fuel as a Saturn V moon rocket. Unfortunately, the range of the machine had gone from about 60 miles per gallon down to single figures, making it impractical to use. However, there was no doubt I could go tanking along, I just needed a petrol tanker in tow. Once again, it was back to the drawing board...

“ There was the small matter of jetting the carb correctly, but that required some knowledge and the jets with which to do it. Neither existed, so it was ignored... ”



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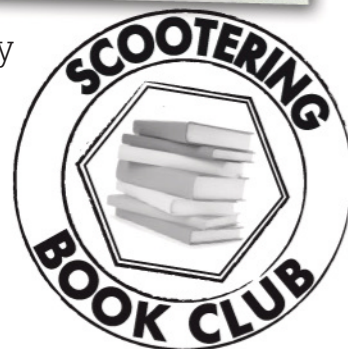


“ If you're a fan of graffiti art this book is a must for your bookshelf. If you're looking to spray your scooter and are short of inspiration, picking up a copy of Old So Kool and a few rattle cans might just be the answer.... ”



Art attack!

Custom scooters are inspired by many things, graffiti art being one of the most subliminal; but Old So Kool could well bring that genre into the limelight.



Arguably the 1980s saw more social change than any other; it was a decade that saw sections of society amass great wealth while others struggled in poverty. The Eighties played out against a backdrop of industrial decline, public disorder and of course the rise of the scooterist culture that we still enjoy today. It also saw the birth of a new form of art, one created by 'normal' people that exploited public space. Although still described as 'graffiti' this went beyond the favourite football team and declaration of undying love daubs that blighted many an inner city underpass. This new generation of graffiti artists took street art to an entirely new level and it's their work that Paul Pilgrim and Steve O'Hara have documented in this lavishly illustrated volume.

Although the number of scooters that have directly lifted their themes from graffiti art may be small, the impact of street artists on the scene can't be underestimated. A good example of artists that emerged from this underground movement is the prolific Gatch, who served his apprenticeship

armed with rattle cans.

Because most of this art is fleeting, being quickly overpainted by zealous local authorities or other artists very few records survive of its brilliance (and in some cases mundanity). This book is the first real attempt to chronicle these short-lived masterpieces. As with all publications that deal with the 1980s, the authors have at times struggled with image quality. The 1980s saw an explosion in availability of cheap camera equipment, much of which produced grainy, discoloured or slightly out of focus photographs. Where it's been necessary to include such images the authors, in my opinion, have made the correct decision not to retouch them. This was after all a decade lived in the raw.

Less pleasing is the lack of any index; the chapters cover the country based on rough geographic regions and without wading through the 2000 images it's impossible to know whether a particular artist or location is featured. Additionally, although billed as documenting 'UK graffiti', if there's anything from outside the English border, I can't find it. That said, it

wasn't at all unpleasant to find myself lost among this volume's pages – I even found a couple of images that brought back memories.

In addition to being a historical record this book brings home one thing: there's no right or wrong way to go about graffiti art. Without doubt there's plenty of talent on display but also plenty of images that can inspire the average scooterist to have a go. The graffiti art movement was all about working outside the 'art establishment', producing art that was both impactive and personal, and that's the spirit of scootering in a nutshell. If you're a fan of graffiti art this book is a must for your bookshelf. If you're looking to spray your scooter and are short

of inspiration, picking up a copy of Old So Kool and a few rattle cans might just be the answer....

Words and images: Stan

Reader offer

Copies of Old So Kool are almost sold out but if you're quick and follow this QR code, we've arranged for a 10% discount on the cover price. Just enter the code: **OSKSCOOT** at checkout.



BUYER'S GUIDE

Title: Old So Kool
Authors: Paul Pilgrim and Steve O'Hara
Format: Hardcover, A4 landscape
Pages: 376
First published: 2022
RRP: £40
ISBN: 9-781911-658986
Best enjoyed with: A tin of Red Bull in an underpass



Small frame – big change

Pinasco has long been an iconic tuning brand and now it's caught the electric bug. However, as Rik discovered, it's being done with a twist.

Here's a question – if you bolt a Pinasco kit on to your own casings and put it into your frame, is your scooter still a classic? I think we'd all agree that it's still a 'classic', albeit with modification. Now for the next step, what if that Pinasco conversion was electric? Pardon, I hear you shout!

Yes, that's it on the nose. Pinasco has come up with an electric conversion – the company has created an electric retrofit to replace the cylinder of the Vespa, while keeping the engine crankcase original and unchanged; this means it doesn't look like most of the other 'bolt on and charge up' kits. It's even kept the kick-start (just for cosmetic reasons). But here's the other mind-blowing point; it's geared. That's right, you did just read that – it's an electric motor, but geared. The aim being to make the transition from petrol to electric less traumatic for the

classicists among us. Pinasco has called this retrofit kit Eureka.

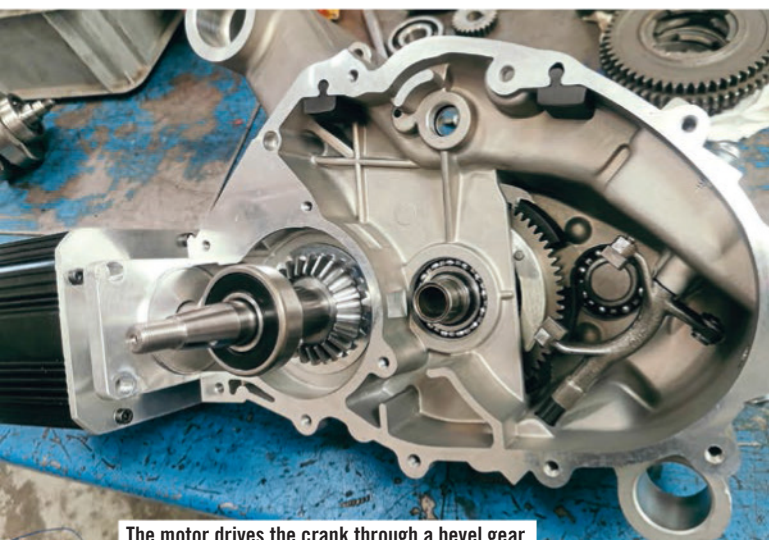
If it looks like a 50 Special then it must be a 50 Special?

Working in collaboration with Crank-e/Vespazzurri, Pinasco has developed a conversion system, specifically, a 3000W brushless electric motor mated to the crankcase which, through a bevel drive, transmits the motion to the gearbox and the clutch unit. The kit doesn't require the replacement of the complete Vespa engine, just the thermal unit and crankshaft; it maintains the gearbox and



The casings remain unaltered, as does the scooter's overall appearance.





The motor drives the crank through a bevel gear.



Maximilian the e-Ape.

“ Working in collaboration with Crank-e/Vespazzurri, Pinasco has developed a conversion system, specifically, a 3000W brushless electric motor mated to the crankcase which, through a bevel drive, transmits the motion to the gearbox and the clutch unit. ”

clutch. For a lot of scooter riders, the switch over to auto is the killing of a sacred cow. For many a Vespa rider the gearbox is indispensable, and its removal can't be contemplated by owners who want to maintain the characteristic Vespa style.

On the right-hand side, they've kept the flywheel cone and attached an aluminum cooling fan that conveys cooling air to the electric motor via a plastic headset cover, similar to that of the original flywheel. The gearbox has been modified, removing the 'first' gear, so the sequence of use is as follows: Neutral, 'second'-'third'-'fourth'.

The Vespa Special used by Pinasco has been configured to comply with all current homologation regulations. (That's all the legal hoops manufacturers must go through to get a vehicle the thumbs up for build and sale in different countries.) This costs a fortune but is slightly easier for lower-powered machines and is the reason why Pinasco's Eureka doesn't exceed 45km/h (I know, I know, but I'm sure some

dark genius out there will dabble with that. I'm not condoning the process, just acknowledging it will happen).

The battery is housed in the tank compartment, and is a 48v lump that guarantees a range of about 50km; for daily use in the city, being aimed directly at commuting and short hops. The charging time is about four hours from 0 to 100%, using a 220v socket.

Supersize me

Not content with the smallframe project, Pinasco has also built an Ape three-wheeler, Maximilian, for one Professor Karin Harrasser. This is an Ape diesel that's been converted into an electro-Ape for Prof Harrasser to drive from Salzburg to Grosseto in Tuscany, a trip of 850km. He'll be sticking to secondary roads; it sounds like an epic and scenic adventure. We'll get more on this as it happens. I was told at the Milan bike fair that the company is working on a kit for largeframes and Angelo sent us some early images of a converted VBB.

Green machines

While there are questions about efficiency loss by adding a gearbox, there's no doubt that this is a novel solution for those of us who are being driven down a 'ban all petrol' route, yet still don't want to lose the classic vibe. Even the green lobby must concede that this idea (using their own matrix) is greener than green. It's recycling an old shell (so that carbon footprint has long been totted up) and is making it 'enviro-friendly' electric. What's not to like? Is this the future? Well, it's much more aesthetically pleasing than some of the monstrosities I've seen being peddled at the international fairs.

Will all this win over the die-hard purists? I doubt it, but I'm sure it'll bring a number of fence sitters over to the fold. Now, if they'd just build in a sound card and weatherproof speaker so that it sounds like a two-stroke I think they'd really be on to something...

Words: Rik

Images: Rik and Michael Bernleitner of www.MOTOMobil.at (supplied by Angelo Stagno)



Largeframe kits are already at the prototype stage.



Angelo Stagno (right) with Andrea Pinasco at Eicma 2022 in Milan.

The Knowledge: Air wear

Motorcycle airbags are now compulsory in high-end motorsport. This month we chat to Joe Moss, of RST's In&Motion collaboration, about how this track technology is being made available for road use.

Whether it's British Superbikes or Moto GP, if you're watching motorcycle sport at the highest echelon then you're tuning in to riders for whom airbags aren't a luxury, they're a requirement. Based in Derbyshire, RST is one of Europe's leading suppliers of motorcycle clothing for both road and race. Recently the company has been working with French firm In&Motion to produce a range of clothing that combines this technology with clothing that's wearable on a day-to-day basis. So without further ado, here's what you need to know.

What's a motorcycle airbag?

Despite the name it's not fitted to a motorcycle (or scooter) – it's part of the range of protective clothing that's available to modern riders. Whatever system's being considered it basically has three elements: an inflatable 'bladder' that

cushions and protects the rider in the event of an accident, an inflater that brings the bladder into operation and a trigger mechanism that sets the device off. There are various trigger mechanisms on the market but they boil down to two options: mechanical, which operate by pulling some sort of cord that activates when the rider and machine separate; and electronic, which are computer controlled and rely on inbuilt sensors to detect an abnormal riding pattern. The system we'll talk about is electronic.

What does it protect?

It's important to remember that the airbag is part of a layered protective system. Modern fabrics such as Kevlar protect the skin from abrasions while body armour protects critical joints. The airbag's specifically designed to protect the torso and neck, areas of the body that are vulnerable to damage in a collision.

How effective is it?

The manufacturers claim that it's the equivalent of having Level 2 armour fitted all around the torso. Unusually, given its use in top tiers of motorsport, most of the research to date (and that's very limited) has concentrated on low-speed impacts of around 30-40mph. That may sound unimpressive but, despite the fact that we like to believe our riding time is mostly spent careering around country lanes getting our knee down, the truth is that most riders spend most of their time at relatively low speeds. If you're going to T-bone a car that's pulled out in front of you, the chances are that'll happen on your local high street, not the M25.

Even if hard research is difficult to come by, the fact that airbag-wearing racers can stand up from a morning crash that sees them hit the ground at around 26 g (human flesh starts to split at 30 g) and go on to race in the afternoon probably says more



Coming to a circuit
near you?



“ The airbag's specifically designed to protect the torso and neck, areas of the body that are vulnerable to damage in a collision. ”

RST's integrated system looks like a normal jacket... the good stuff's inbuilt.

than any boffin can. If you want first-hand testimony, we've attached a QR code which will take you to a short video by TT racer Sam West, who explains his lack of injuries when he took on a stone wall and lost.

How does the bag know when to inflate?

This is the magic part. The In&Motion pack is centred around an In&Box that constantly gathers data about a rider's speed, acceleration, deceleration and cornering angle. These are fed back to a central hub which studies when an airbag has and hasn't deployed. By 'learning' from these real life and simulated experiences the computer is able to determine what's normal and abnormal riding behaviour. As an example, riding from traffic light to traffic light in a straight line, the rider will experience high acceleration and braking forces. With more than 30 million data points (and counting) the computer recognises what's going on. Even weaving for a quick overtake produces a 'normal' set of parameters. If a car pulls out, the rider loses control and goes into a high- or low-side fall, that also produces a recognisable set of parameters. In the latter case the computer knows that something's gone wrong and triggers the airbag.

How long does it take to inflate?

It takes the computer around 35 milliseconds to realise something's gone wrong and another 25 milliseconds for the bag to inflate. To put that into perspective a typical blink lasts around 150 milliseconds.

Does it deflate automatically?

Unlike motorsport airbags, which deflate automatically, European safety standards require the road version to be deflated manually. This is because assistance for a road user is usually going to take longer to arrive than on a race circuit. The bag will ensure the neck and spine are supported until expert assistance arrives. Of course, if a rider's uninjured they can deflate the jacket themselves.

Will wearing an airbag jacket make me look like the Michelin man?

The actual bladder is thin enough to be concealed inside a normal looking jacket while the In&Motion pack is around the same size as a mobile phone. The inflator is fitted into the Level 1 back protector. In total this takes up about as much space as a Level 2 protector would do normally.

I suppose it's all 'power ranger' clothing at the moment?

It's true that, so far as we're aware, no one's produced an airbag fishtail parka or flight jacket but there's already a wide range of styles available. These start with casual jackets through to one-piece race suits. If you really must wear your own jacket there are vest options available but these do tend to add some bulk and can restrict movement, one reason that RST has decided to concentrate on specially designed garments.

How much will it cost?

A jacket fitted with the In&Motion system costs around £170 over an equivalent garment, but that doesn't include the In&Box.



When inflated the front bags protect the chest, while at the rear it's the spine and neck that benefit.

This can be moved between garments; for summer and winter riding or indeed road and track. Although it can be purchased outright for £400, most customers opt for a £12 monthly subscription. This includes a never-ending warranty on the box and the ability, once a year, to reduce the subscription to £4 per month for a period of one, two or three months. This benefits riders who lay their machines up for winter without the complications of returning the unit to France.

Asking for a friend, will it go off if the jacket's worn while walking about?

In the words of the manufacturer there has to be a 'minimum set of violence' for the jacket to activate. Fear not, the computer can tell when you've had a few beers and simply fallen off a kerb. An airbag can really help you with everyday riding accidents but you're on your own with that one!

Words: Stan

Images: Paul Green/RST/Stan

HOW TO TAKE ON A STONE WALL AND (ALMOST) WIN

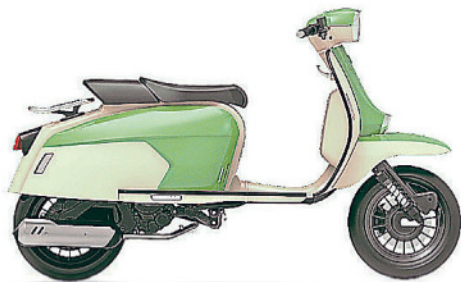
Follow this QR code to hear TT rider Sam West's experiences of wearing an airbag suit.



The In&Box 'brain' and inflator are surprisingly compact.

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See noble Sir Ian fight the mighty beast!

How to train your **DRAGON**

Ah yes. *Draconae Lambrettae Vulgaris*. The common garden dragon. Once a regular sight around the flats of Norfolk, in recent years it has been spotted more frequently in the coastal areas of Lincolnshire.





The mythical beast in all its glory.

A truly mythical beast, it first came to the public's wider attention in the middle of 1992 when an article appeared in the pages of this same periodical, putting to rest the misguided beliefs of those who didn't believe dragons still survived to this day. Once she became well known about (we know it to be a 'she' from the lovely yellow underbelly so typical of the species), she briefly seemed to disappear from view for some time. Not totally unsurprising for these shy creatures; but before long she re-emerged along the east coast, entertaining and delighting small children who had not learned to fear the beast and becoming the darling of the local dragon spotters' society; many of whom, it is rumoured, have now sworn abstinence as a result.

From the memoirs of Lord Cyril Rambling, dragon enthusiast:

"A largely harmless beast, this noble creature retains her ability to belch forth smoke, although fire seems lacking in her belly of late, poor thing, although it's good to see a baby draconae peering out from what we politely call an 'exhaust port.'" Or something like that.

Mythical beast

It's been some time since this scooter was last featured in this magazine, issue 82 for those keeping count, and since that time has changed hands, with the original builder, Richard Norman, passing it on to the current custodian some time before lockdown.



Detail is everything. Each of those scales is individually mounted, and that glaring eye belies the featherlike eyelashes...

OWNER DETAILS

Name: Ian Burrett.

Scooter club & town: Grimsby.

What was your first scooter and how did you first become interested in them: My first scooter was in 1970 – you were either a Mod or a Rocker.

Any interesting or funny scooter stories: Kate Middleton came to Grimsby to open the heritage centre and I thought what a good idea to entertain the crowd; get dressed up, take the dragon and take the 'grim' out of Grimsby. Turned out

that it wasn't such a good idea. I was soon surrounded by undercover cops enquiring about me and my scooter. One of them became concerned when he saw a bulldog on the front of the mudguard with wires attached that led to a switch on the handlebars and asked, "What's that switch for?" I said: "I'll show you." As I hit the button the undercover cop leapt backwards just as the bulldog started singing and dancing to God Save The Queen!



SCOOTER SPECIFICATIONS

Name of scooter: Freeda The Dragon.

Scooter model: There's an Li125 in there somewhere.

Time to build & by who: Two and a half years by Richard Norman but I have made some modifications during lockdown; namely a pair of flapping wings.

Engine specification: It's just an old school 175 conversion.

What's it like to ride? Not easy. Because the frame has been shortened all your weight is on your wrists but I'm used to it now.

FRAME SPEC:

Paintwork & murals by: Richard Norman and myself.

Are there any specialised parts: Flapping wings.

Are there any other unique details we have missed? Loads, take a good look, everything is modified.

What was the hardest part of the project:

To enhance it. All credit to Norman who came up with the idea in the first place.

Do you have any advice or tech tips for anyone starting a project: If it's in your head you can do it.

Is there anything still to add to the scooter: Fire and smoke. ?

Is there anyone you wish to thank:

Lee Thompson who supported me when I broke down in Holland and we rode through a storm with lightning striking the road in front of us.

Any additional information: At Christmas the dragon gets dressed as a reindeer, and I dress as Santa. We ride around as Santa And The Dragon Deer.

“ Resplendent in his St George riding gear, he stopped to ask for directions. The locals had one quick look at this English eccentric, took to their heels and were never seen again. ”

The current keeper, (somehow it seems wrong to refer to the logbook holder as the 'owner'), Ian Burrett was taken with the dragon, which he mentally referred to as Freeda The Dragon, when it first made its appearance – and when a chance to take custody came up, he flew at the chance.

Covid then came along and everyone got to stay at home. Now, while some of us sat at home and organised our CD collections, or organised parties while working, Ian took it upon himself to improve his metal pet. It's at this point in the normal way of things that an article would start listing the improved parts, who did the tuning, which talented artist waved his airbrush over the scooter to create another masterpiece which contrasted with the chrome, or lack of, to build the scooter that you're looking at.

That doesn't really apply here, does it? Tuning is taken care of by the old-fashioned method of mating a TV175 cylinder to an Li125 block, with a carb and what appears to be a modified Fresco exhaust, and that's about the sum of it.

Hardly firebreathing, I suppose I have to say...

The paint was originally applied by the creator, though with the addition of wings that now flap, and yet more individually made and attached scales, this has been matched perfectly by Ian. Yes, each scale on this scooter has been handmade and then fixed in place before being painted. Rather him than me....

But this isn't what this particular scooter is about. It's just about having a bit of fun and not taking things seriously. There are a lot of small stories about this scooter that Ian can tell you, but one in particular stands out. Despite the somewhat agricultural build of the engine, it's very widely travelled, collecting trophies seemingly wherever

it goes, from classic British scooter rally Bangers And Mash to a rally in Gothenburg. On the way back from the latter, he managed to get lost and ended up in a retirement village. Resplendent in his St George riding gear, he stopped to ask for directions. The locals had one quick look at this English eccentric, took to their heels and were never seen again.

I'm sure that story should have ended the other way round.

It normally does.

But going against the norm is what scooterists in general do, and what this scooter has now spent almost 25 years doing so well.

Words and images: Nik



A pair of rams operate the wings,

Crossing continents

Despite never having ridden a Vespa, in the summer of 2022 Trevor Dodds bought one over the phone. Three months later he was on his way to Istanbul...

In 2022, my wife Yegane and I cycled toured on our Brompton bikes from Baku, Azerbaijan through Georgia and Turkey, eventually finishing in Cyprus. We both took a battering over the journey and not unreasonably Yegane suggested things might have been easier by motorcycle. I think she had something like BMW GS1200 in mind, I on the other hand had a lust for a Vespa. I'd previously owned an adventure bike and hadn't got on with it very well. I fancied something smaller, fun, and just a little bit different from all the very similar looking adventure bikes we'd seen as we'd cycled up mountains in 40-degree heat.

Impulse guy

When we got back to the UK, on a bit of a whim, I called a Vespa dealer and bought a green Racing Sixties GTS300. A few days later I collected it from Colchester Kawasaki, but on the ride home I wasn't sure if this was the bike for me. The handling was completely different from anything I'd ridden before, I felt very vulnerable on the motorway and it felt slightly 'twitchy' underneath me. It took a few weeks of riding to get to know the Vespa, but once I'd grown used to the different riding style I fell in love with it. I fancied another long trip and thought the Vespa would be perfect; being honest I didn't give too much thought for having a pillion or carrying luggage. Over the next few weeks, I fitted front and rear luggage racks and bought what I thought were the bare necessities for the trip; a Krieger rucksack, two half-litre fuel cans, a set of waterproofs and some squirty stuff in case I got a puncture. On Tuesday, October 4, I bought my Eurotunnel ticket for the coming Thursday.

Although I'd be riding through Europe solo, Yegane would join me in Istanbul for the second half of the journey through Turkey to Cyprus. On the Thursday I said goodbye to my son and by the evening I was in Reims, having covered 337 miles. I was happy, comfortable, and pleased to be heading off on my next adventure.

The long slog

The next day I planned to head to Strasbourg and maybe as far as Munich. As anyone who's done this type of trip can confirm, France is a beautiful country but its autoroutes are boring. There's no discount for motorbikes, but they are useful to cover long distances in a short time. I really wanted to get to Slovenia and Croatia as quickly as possible, as I felt this was where my tour would really begin. Unfortunately, the French had other ideas and strikes by refinery workers meant that most petrol stations either had no petrol or long queues. As most scooterists know, the small fuel tank means that thinking about filling up is never far from your mind and I resolved not to let the fuel gauge dip below two bars, reasoning that would give me enough range to find a petrol station.



RIGHT: Trevor and his trusty Racing Sixties.



“ I'd previously owned an adventure bike and hadn't got on with it very well. I fancied something smaller, fun, and just a little bit different from all the very similar looking adventure bikes we'd seen as we'd cycled up mountains in 40-degree heat. ”



Loading was a process of trial and error.

Over the next few days I developed a routine that's served me well. Each evening I would fill up with fuel so I could make a clean getaway each morning. I'm not one for early starts and decided it would be better to be on the road between 8am and 9am, which let me have a good sleep, eat breakfast (three cups of black coffee) and answer work emails. Another part of this learning process was that by the end of the day my shoulders were feeling tired. Things improved on that front when I realised I wasn't on a motorcycle. The Vespa's fitted with a bag carrier ring and having secured the rucksack with this I could place it between my legs! Another reason for getting out of Northern Europe as quickly as possible was the cost of hotels and I wanted to do this trip as economically as possible. I didn't fancy camping; to be honest I'm too old for all of that and I like a shower at the beginning and the end of each day.

The next few days saw me leave Germany, pass through Austria and on to Slovenia. The Austrian motorways were very quiet and somewhat uninspiring, but the service stations made up for that with a very good buffet restaurant, all a far cry from the food on offer at motorway services in the UK. I was filling up with 102 octane E5 petrol and the Vespa literally flew along, I was always hitting the speed limiter and have resolved to fit a 'speed ring' to help with this for the next part of the trip.

Having crossed into Slovenia I decided to stay the night in Bled, a 30-minute ride from the border. Having checked into my basic, but clean, hotel I rode into the old town in search of something to eat, only to



Eurotunnel, the adventure begins...



Germany was beautiful, big, and best left behind before bankruptcy.

“ The Vespa was lapping it up and the sheer fun of leaning in and out of corners was addictive ”

stumble across a British motorcyclist on his Royal Enfield Himalayan. He was returning to the UK, having ridden more or less the same route as I'd planned but in reverse. We exchanged stories about our passions for motorcycles over a beer and a great burger. Travelling makes it difficult to eat salads and the like, but I was trying to be as 'good' as I could. His friendly company was in marked contrast to the group of German bikers who'd also stayed at the same hotel. They couldn't bring themselves to acknowledge my "Gut morgen," obviously deciding that a Vespa rider wasn't worthy of their time.

Less work, more wine

As I headed out of Bled, my goal was to reach Rijeka, Croatia via Ljubljana, which was an easy day of only 164km. The roads were really quiet, and I arrived in Ljubljana 45 minutes later. There's not much to say about Ljubljana, a walk around the old town and a quick coffee seemed to cover most of what it had to offer. By contrast the country roads were heavenly, with great road surfaces and accident-inducing scenery. I was enjoying the ride and nodding my head at the sports bikes and tourers coming in the opposite direction and receiving waves in return.

Everyone seemed to be making the most of the late summer weather, including farm dogs asleep in the middle of the road. I was in a real holiday mood and thinking that I should be at work now, which seemed to make the ride feel even better. It's liberating to lose track of time, but also disconcerting. I found myself ignoring work emails, which was something I needed to get on top of. The only reason I could afford to make the trip was by continuing to work remotely.

Before I knew it I was approaching the Croatian border and nearing the end of my music playlist. A Mod mix seemed at odds with the scenery, but who can resist riding along to The Real Me by The Who? I was able to listen to music, check my emails and make phone calls as I went thanks to the Cardo comms system I'd bought. It's a great piece of kit. Customers would call me, and they had no clue where I was, or even that I was riding my scooter.

There was a queue of cars at the border and I wondered whether I could scoot up to the front, but two Vespas pulled up alongside me. This was Darre and his friend from the Vespa Club of Slovenia and they told me to follow them. We zipped past the border without showing our passports; as Croatia wasn't part of the Schengen zone at this time I did wonder whether the lack of a stamp may prove problematic later on.



With the Vespa Club of Slovenia.

Anyway, after what I presumed was a 'follow me' wave, I rode behind Darre on his GTS300 and marvelled at how well he could negotiate the sharp twists and turns. Despite carrying luggage I managed to keep up with him and 20 minutes later we stopped close to Rijeka, where we enjoyed a couple of coffees at a small cafe on the beach. This part of town resembled Monaco, with gated mansions and the odd Bentley. The weather was around 25 degrees and I just sat there with my new friends soaking up the sun, thinking of how bloody lucky I was to be making this journey and to have such great weather. A few back slaps and a shaking of hands, an exchange of telephone numbers and we all went our separate ways. You really do meet the nicest people on a Vespa.

Before I left the UK, I'd been concerned as to whether the Vespa was really capable of such a journey, but now I knew it was more than up to the job. No matter how many miles I'd ridden I always felt sad to get off it at the end of the day; sometimes I felt like a neglectful parent leaving it outside on the street on its own overnight!

The apartment I rented in Rijeka was incredible; modern, clean and really comfortable. As I'd literally lived in the same clothes since I left the UK, I took the opportunity of doing some hand washing before heading into town for a glass of wine and something to eat. For decades this part of the Adriatic coast was the playground of rich Europeans and Rijeka feels very Italian.

I found a little restaurant and enjoyed a couple of glasses of red wine and a full rack of pork ribs. As it was quiet the waitress sat with me for an hour, told me the history of the Balkan war in the 90s and about her parents and her plans. The next morning I started my usual routine, packing the scooter and hunting for a coffee. However, the smell of fresh bean and sausage stew wafting from a cafe near to where I'd parked was too much to resist and I treated myself to a bowl while watching a couple of older retirees enjoying a glass of wine and a beer. It was just after 9am, maybe this is why the Mediterranean lifestyle is so healthy? Less work and more wine.

The glorious coast

Over breakfast I'd taken a quick look at the map and decided I would head to Zadar, which would allow me to follow the coast road for the day. It was ride of about 300km so it would be another short day. I set off with the confidence of someone at one with their machine, took the wrong turning and ended up on the motorway. I travelled for about 45km before I found a suitable junction and then headed back down to the coast. The upside of having to take the detour meant that I could enjoy otherwise unseen villages. At one point I'd followed a lady car driver who must've been 70 but she drove like Michael Schumacher and it was a real effort to keep up with her.

I hadn't realised how much I'd climbed and the 30km or so back to the coast road was through the countryside. The bends



Croatia's Adriatic coast is simply perfect.

were sharp and it was a steep descent. I was constantly on and off the brakes, but the Vespa was lapping it up and the sheer fun of leaning in and out of corners was addictive. The scooter seemed to have a mind of its own and knew where it was going, I was merely going along for the ride. I stopped for another coffee by the seafront at a small village and yet again had to ask myself how much more beautiful the scenery could become. The coast road was like something out of a Top Gear road trip episode. This was the best road I have ever been on. This was motorcycle Nirvana.

To my left it was rugged with a backdrop of mountains while to my right was the crystal turquoise sea with little islands dropped here and there like dumplings. At times it was hilly with some gentle, but steady climbs and the before you knew it there was a sharp left- or right-hand bend that in turn would be followed by a hairpin corner or a bridge. Even though I could see through the bends it was always surprising how much sharper they were than I'd judged them to be. I was in my element and could feel myself becoming more confident as I got to know what the Vespa was capable of.

I headed into Zadar, which reminded me of a small Dubrovnik. It's a very picturesque town on the Dalmatian coast with a Romanesque square and a 11th century church. Even in the middle of October the town centre was full of tourists. This was the end of today's journey and after a coffee and gelato I booked another small apartment which was 3-4km from the town but had secure parking. Earlier in the day I'd called at a bakery and bought some little savoury pastries called 'borek,' which I ate for dinner as I didn't fancy going out to eat. After an hour of checking work emails and making calls home to the family, I was ready for bed.

The next day was an early start, with my intention being to reach Mostar, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before setting off I always check my documents and make sure I have my wallet in a safe, but easily accessible part



It's difficult living healthily on the road.

of my rucksack. As I went through the routine of checking everything was in place I realised that I'd lost my bank card. Gingerly I logged on to my banking app and with relief saw that it hadn't been used. I decided that as I had Apple Pay on my phone I wouldn't bother reporting it but resolved to keep checking it throughout the day.

Border crossings always make for an interesting day, but on this trip they were also a little fraught as I'd forgotten to bring my V5 with me; I only had a PDF copy that my wife had sent to me and I'd stored on my phone. So far I'd not been asked to produce it, but I knew that at some point my luck would run out.

The journey from Zadar to the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina was a repeat of the previous day; beautiful scenery, great roads and fresh coffee all interspersed with plenty of fuel and picture stops. Before I knew it I'd reached the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and I handed over my passport to the border guard. As I passed it across to her I remembered that I'd not cleared passport control in Croatia. She then demanded that I produce my V5. I had a feeling that this crossing wasn't going to run smoothly...

Next month: Find out if Trevor clears the border and where the adventure takes him and the GTS

Words and images: Trevor Dodds

The Lexicon of Scooters

15

Durkopp Diana

History has consigned Durkopp's Diana to being an 'also ran', which is unjust – for in its time this German scooter was equal to, if not better than, those produced by either Vespa or Lambretta.

By the early 1950s, the might of Innocenti and Piaggio dominated scooter production. Other manufacturers were keen to secure a slice of this lucrative market, but their designs were often sub-standard, being compromised by using components from the 'parts bin' and rushed into production without the correct attention to detail. There were very few exceptions to this rule, one such company being Durkopp, originally a German sewing machine manufacturer that had ventured into the automotive market.

Post-war, Durkopp was having relative success with small-capacity motorcycles and decided that a scooter would be a logical addition to its range. In 1953 it previewed a purpose-built scooter called the Diana, and this went into production the following year.

While other manufacturers were, in some cases, blatantly copying the successful Lambretta and Vespa designs, Durkopp adopted a more innovative approach by combining the best of both designs with the excellence of German engineering.

To all intents and purposes the 'big two' exercised a practical monopoly of scooter sales across most of Europe. For any new scooter to stand a chance of competing, it had to be something special, and the Diana had something the Lambretta and Vespa didn't: power.

Bigger is better

On its release in 1954, the Diana's main selling point was its single-cylinder two-stroke engine with a capacity of 200cc (actually 194cc), which at the time outstripped its main rivals by 50cc. As expected, it was more powerful and faster, while still giving good fuel economy; a major selling point at the time. Coupled with a foot controlled four-speed gearbox the scooter was capable of speeds approaching 60mph, so there is no doubt it was aimed at the top end of the scooter market. Although initially launched with six-volt electrics this later changed to 12 volt, something the Lambretta never achieved in its entire production run.

It was clear to see that the

Lambretta range had influenced the general layout of the machine, certainly around the legshield and central frame area. However, at the time the primary Lambretta model was the LD with its stepped rear frame and side panel design but the Diana had a profile more akin to the Series 1. As Innocenti didn't introduce that design for another three years, is it possible that it was inspired by the Diana?

At the front, the Diana looked more like a Vespa, with its turning mudguard and similarly styled horncasting. The legshields were rectangular in appearance but curved at the top edge with a dip underneath the front headlamp, perhaps a deliberate attempt by designers to separate the Diana from its main competitors? The handlebars and headset, with its round headlamp and general configuration, paid homage to Piaggio but the overall look of the machine was an amalgamation of both the Lambretta and Vespa. Ironically this gave the Diana a distinctive appearance.

Contemporary reviews highlighted its luxurious



The Diana resembled both Lambretta and Vespa bodywork. Note the round handle in the centre of the side panel, which was used to lock it in position.



Offering a 200cc engine, electric kick-starter and great styling, the Durkopp Diana was a scooter like none of its contemporaries.



The narrow toolbox, which was inadequate to be of real use.

looks, excellent performance and smooth ride. Some went so far as to label it “the top-end of scooter comfort”. Unfortunately, quality came at a price and from its launch the Diana was one of the most expensive scooters available. This was a major drawback at a time when most customers were seeking cheap transport rather than luxury. Undeterred, Durkopp stuck to its philosophy and never developed a budget version. Instead, it relied on steady sales to build the Diana's reputation. Outside of the German market, the company's main target was the UK, so a concession was set up with the Ruislip-based company, Concessionaires (Scooters) Ltd, confident it could succeed with its quality product.

Style and performance

In 1959, Durkopp attempted to attract a more discerning market to the Diana by introducing two new models, the TS and the Sport.

The TS stood for Tourist Superb and had a 175cc engine fitted (200cc in the UK), with the UK version producing 9.5bhp. This meant it rivalled its competition in terms of performance and was explicitly aimed at the touring market. While the TS's styling remained similar to the previous model, there was a change at the front. The headlamp was now fixed centrally in the middle of the horn casting, no doubt being influenced by the Series 1 Lambretta. The horn grille also had a much wider, ‘bull nose’ appearance, making it instantly recognisable from other makes of scooter. The headset, with the lamp now removed, allowed more space for the speedometer, which resembled that used in a car and made it far more appealing than the traditional round shape. Again the housing was similar in layout to that fitted on the LD and wasn't enclosed.

“ At the time it challenged the prowess of the ‘big two’ and often exceeded their technical efforts. That's a claim that very few manufacturers who dared to venture into the scooter market can make. ”

Again Durkopp demonstrated its design acumen by taking designs from elsewhere but altering them slightly and if anything improving them.

The Diana Sport retained the same shape as the original but with major changes to the engine. Although its capacity remained 200cc, the power was increased to 12bhp, a figure that production Lambrettas never attained, and that Vespa would take more than a decade to achieve. The claimed top speed was 60mph and in the right conditions, this was a true statement. What impressed commentators more was the Diana Sport's acceleration and road handling, both receiving positive reviews in contemporary road tests. There was no doubt that both models were well designed, and the development tweaks over the years had resulted in one of the best scooters on the market.

All sewn up

Unfortunately, the price of the Diana was its Achilles' heel; despite its strengths and innovations it was simply too expensive to be competitive. By 1960 the TS cost £211 and the Sport £217. At the time a GS150 could be purchased for £188, while one of the last available LDs could be picked up for £139. As sales began to dwindle and

with no realistic chance of significantly reducing production costs in 1961, Durkopp decided to cease motorcycle and scooter production altogether and concentrate on the more lucrative sewing machine side of its business.

This signalled the end of the road for the Diana, but not without leaving a legacy. In a relatively short period of production Durkopp not only managed to produce scooters with bigger capacity and more power than its rivals, the effortless and smooth performance proved that it had ironed out many of the problems associated with small-wheeled machines. In addition, the 12-volt lighting and electric starter had offered luxury rarely seen among other scooter manufacturers; incredibly this whole package had been wrapped up in bodywork that looked good.

Sadly, the Durkopp Diana falls into the category of scooters that nearly made it, which is a shame, because if production and development had continued, the Diana could have been one of the best scooters ever. At the time it challenged the prowess of the ‘big two’ and often exceeded their technical efforts. That's a claim that very few manufacturers who dared to venture into the scooter market can make.

Words: Stuart Owen

Images: Mortons Archive

Durkopp Diana That was then...

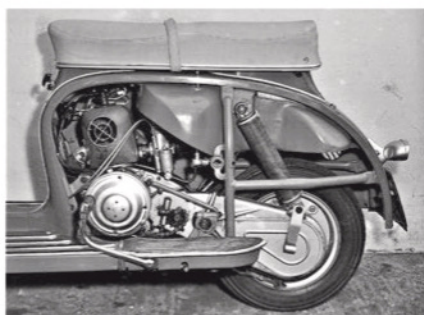
Back in March 1957, *The Motor Cycle* had many practical points to consider on its road test of the Diana. Petrol theft and high-heeled shoes were higher on the list than many would imagine...



The TS's wide horn grille made it instantly recognisable.



The petrol filler cap and air filter were accessed by lifting the seat.



With the panel removed, it is possible to see the vertical engine layout and fully enclosed chain drive.

Stylish German scooter combining a sprightly performance with tractability, quiet running and powerful brakes.

Aesthetically the Diana has more in common with the Italian than the German genre of scooters. That comment is made without any condescension because it can hardly be denied that the average German-designed scooter, for all its virtues of robustness and workmanship, performance and handling, lacks that svelte elegance of line which characterises its Italian counterpart. Yet in its solid build, quiet liveliness and the uncompromising power of its brakes, the Diana reveals its country of origin.

With the petrol turned on, the handlebar lever moved to the starting position and the throttle opened a little, the engine would fire almost immediately the key was depressed; even on cold mornings the Noris electric starter spun the engine really briskly. Although it is low geared and the overhung pedal springy, the emergency kick-starter proved capable of fulfilling its purpose. Even from cold the engine had an unusually slow and regular tickover for a two-stroke and the throttle response was good at all times.

The characteristics of the engine are markedly continental in that the torque is relatively poor at low rpm but the power can be felt to come in as the speed increases. Though the minimum non-snatch speed is quite credible, use of the gearbox was encouraged by a low-frequency vibration which occurred between 17 and 24mph in top gear and at equivalent speeds in the intermediate ratios. With intelligent employment of the gearbox the performance proved remarkably lively for a 200cc scooter that weighs not far short of 3cwt.

At any speed between 25mph up to a genuine 50mph (the speedometer was almost spot on at 30mph and 3mph optimistic at 50mph) the Diana would cruise tirelessly and third gear could quite happily be used to hold the higher speed on the longer main road hills. Once out of

“It can hardly be denied that the average German-designed scooter, for all its virtues of robustness and workmanship, performance and handling, lacks that svelte elegance of line which characterises its Italian counterpart.”



The Sport retained the same look as the standard Diana, being distinguishable by the Sport script.

the low frequency period the engine was delightfully vibrationless right up to the exalted maximum rpm attained in bottom and second gears. Two-stroking under light load was average but, owing to the highly effective and melodious exhaust silencing, irregular firing was hardly noticeable save through the transmission snatch which took place on the overrun with the throttle stop set to give it a tickover.

It would be difficult to envisage a more satisfactory gear change system for a scooter than that on the Diana. There is a single pedal in the middle of the left footboard; the pedal is moved rearwards to change up and forward to change down – two simple movements. Pedal travel is short, the action pleasantly light and the actual change beyond reproach for its speed and positiveness. With a less excellent gearbox the amount of changing necessary for the speedy negotiation of traffic might have proved irksome but instead there was a distinct temptation to change gear for its own sake. When the performance figures were being taken, full throttle upward changes were made with complete ease and certainty, though the practice is hardly recommended for normal use. The clutch was light and smooth in operation and appeared to be immune to abuse.

Because of the Diana's weight and higher than average centre of gravity, manhandling

called for some effort, but once on the move the feeling of heaviness vanished. With only the rider aboard the steering was delightfully light yet positive, and only when a pillion passenger was carried was there a mild tendency to wander. That apart, the handling was first class and the machine could be threaded through traffic and heeled round bends with great facility. Gusty side winds did not at any time have a pronounced adverse effect on the steering.

In spite of the relatively short wheelbase, riding comfort was above average for a scooter and pitching was rarely encountered. The rear springing worked really well and with either one or two up; the action of the pivoted front fork was noticeably firm but the suspension coped ably with the more severe road shocks. The riding position proved equally suitable for tall or short riders since it is compact without being cramped. Passengers, too, commented on the comfort of the rear seating position. The cellular rubber seating was adequately soft for journeys of under two hours' duration but for longer trips a little more resilience would have been appreciated.

As mentioned earlier, one of the outstanding features of the Diana is the power of its brakes. As the performance table shows, they were able to stop the machine in a very short distance, and that on a decidedly smooth surface. So much braking potential

is a real delight to the experienced rider but should be explored carefully by the novice. The heel operation of the rear brake found little favour because, though the toe could be rested on the footboard while the brake was actuated, the sensitivity of control is less through the thickness of a shoe heel than through a sole. Also the layout would virtually preclude the wearing of high-heeled shoes by a lady rider. Owing to the direct anchorage of the front brake shoe plate to the fork there was slight wheel patter when braking on bumpy surfaces.

The model was ridden extensively in wet weather and the absence of a windscreen (available as an extra) was a distinct disadvantage. In other respects the weather protection is of a high order: the frontal shield is of adequate height and width, and no draught was experienced round the ankles. Mudguarding proved effective save that the rear numberplate soon became obscured by mud. Cleaning down the machine took no more than a few minutes.

Loud but of pleasant tone, the horn note was appreciated but the lights fell short of the usual high German standard in two respects. The switch, situated on the front of the main bodywork section, is far from accessible; the dipped headlamp beam had a rather short range and dark area in the middle. A luggage grid is available at extra charge but was not fitted to the test model. However, a means of carrying luggage or other items was provided by a hook positioned below the instrument panel.

In these days of petrol shortage the security of having the tank filler cap under the lockable seat was welcomed. A minor criticism concerned the twistgrip friction adjusting screw which slackened itself off on several occasions. The centre stand, of the non-lift double prop type, was very easy to operate and if the machine was wheeled gently backward as the stand was depressed the effort involved was negligible.

A single bayonet fastening secures each side panel, removal of which results in unusually good accessibility to the power unit, transmission and ancillaries. All the normal maintenance tasks could be carried out with gratifying ease and speed. The eccentric mounting of the pivot for the rear suspension arm makes chain adjustment child's play.





Out of the shadows.



Gearchange is foot operated.

Durkopp Diana

This is now

We all dream of discovering and rescuing a long-abandoned scooter, but would you go out of your way for a Durkopp Diana? Fortunately 'Two wheel Tony' knows a good thing when he sees it.

As his nickname implies 'Two wheel Tony' is no stranger to a scooter or three and eagle-eyed readers will already have spotted a Lince lurking in the background to these images (more of that in a future issue). However even his encyclopedic knowledge failed to identify a scooter he'd passed repeatedly as it slowly decayed in a local garden. He knew it wasn't a Vespa

or Lambretta but as it was hiding under a curtain of moss, short of rummaging around in a stranger's backyard there was nothing he could do but wonder as to its origins. That was until one day, as he broke the mind-numbing monotony of a trip to Asda by leafing through the discount book section, he picked up a copy of The Big Boy's Bumper Book of Motorcycles or some such coffee table nonsense. As he flicked through



'Two wheel Tony' and his 20-year project.



Electrics were initially 6v but later upgraded to 12v.



Sprung and damped suspension is neatly executed.



Rear grille is distinctly LD, but air actually exits the system by the front vent.

the pages he saw a familiar shape and there, laid out in glorious badly captioned colour before him was the rotting scooter, or at least an intact version of it. Armed with the knowledge that it was Durkopp Diana, Tony did... nothing. Some time later Tony, who's a dab hand with a brush, was asked to price up a painting job. Yes, you've guessed correctly and after throwing around a little white gloss Tony left with a fist full of cash and a rather neglected Durkopp Diana. In his own words, Tony "knew nothing about it, but I knew it needed some love."

Dealing with the difference

While there's much to be said about getting to know certain marques of scooter inside out, it's also true to say that variety is the spice of life. Much as the Asda discount book had identified the scooter it provided very little by way of detail; in fact it was only as Tony got to grips with the machine that its idiosyncrasies became clear.

Firstly this is a heavy old lump, weighing in at about 150kg, or around a bag of cement more than a Lambretta GP. Gearchange is by means of a 'heel and toe'

pedal on the floorboards and depressing the kick-starter automatically throws the gearbox into neutral. Much to Tony's delight he discovered that his Diana was the Sports version with a three-ring piston and bevelled head to ensure it sits correctly. Unlike the arrangement employed by both Lambretta and Vespa, the Diana pulls cool air from outside the machine, not under the panels. This air is passed over the head and expelled with such force that it's possible to feel the amount of air being expelled from a vent on the opposite side of the scooter.



With the panel removed the direct air intake can be easily identified.



Set release is a novel shape.



Seat lifts from the front, giving access to fuel filler and air filter.

“ It was only as Tony got to grips with the machine that its idiosyncrasies became clear. ”



Kick-start automatically selects neutral.

If the engine, with its enclosed chain drive, looks and performs very differently from its contemporary Italian cousins then brace yourself for the frame. This comprises a monocoque front end and tubular rear. Durkopp, just pick a team will you? If that wasn't strange enough the frame also forms part of the exhaust. Spent gases are fed from the cylinder into the frame before feeding into a one-into-two silencer system. Parts for this are pure unobtainium, a German engineer recently hand built a small batch but other than that they've been unavailable for decades. Unfortunately, that's not the only bad news for prospective Diana owners. Most parts are difficult, if not impossible, to source. It's this fact and not Tony's green credentials that account for the high level of originality on this example. Having drilled off the trim for painting, he discovered that no replacements were available and then carefully re-soldered all the fixing pins back in place. Looking around the machine the only 'major' component that wasn't dragged out of the undergrowth that day is the Bakelite headlight switch. The nearest replacement, both in terms of fit and geography, came from a classic motorcycle dealer in the US. It's not a Durkopp part but is so close as to make no difference.

Having owned the Diana for almost 20 years, Tony's become accustomed to its eccentricities but never ceases to be amazed at the quality of components used; a small example being the rear light lens which isn't plastic, it's glass. No wonder that Durkopp's manufacturing costs were so high.

For Tony this has been a labour of love but his reward is a scooter that's both unusual and practical. With a top speed of between 60 and 65mph and a power delivery that he describes as "both smooth and powerful," the Diana is capable of holding its own on everything but the fastest of modern roads. The days of this particular Diana being abandoned in a garden are long forgotten, but Durkopp's creation deserves to be more widely remembered, both as the truly innovative product it was at the time and the classic that it's now become.

Words: Nik/Stan

Images: Nik



DURKOPP DIANA THE ABC

Model: Durkopp Diana.
Introduced: 1954.
Production (all variants): 24,963.
Engine: Durkopp 194cc single cylinder two-stroke.
Bore x stroke: 64x61mm.
Compression ratio: 6.5:1.
Carburettor: Bing 1/26/41.
Transmission: Four-speed gearbox, primary chain in oil bath, secondary chain fully enclosed.
Power: 9.5 to 12bhp depending on model.
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Wheelbase: 1308mm.
Weight: (wet) 150kg.

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A quick one with Smoove

Smoove & Turrell's self-styled 'northern funk' sound has rapidly become a popular part of the British rally scene. Sarge caught up with them ahead of their headline set at this year's Scarborough National.

Ever since Smoove & Turrell's limited edition debut single I Can't Give You Up was unleashed back in 2009, the North East-based Geordie outfit has acquired a strong following among both Mod and scooterist fraternities. When that single was released, Smoove & Turrell was a newly formed trio consisting of DJ, promoter and producer Smoove, keyboardist Mike Porter and headhunted vocalist John Turrell. In a short time, they upsized into a full band and soon established themselves on the

live circuit, touring with their debut album Antique Soul. Over the following 12 years, Smoove & Turrell went from strength to strength, with live shows, extensive radio plays as well as TV and film work, both nationally and internationally. So far six successful studio albums have been released, the most recent being Stratos Bleu. During those 12 years Smoove &



Turrell have played at many scooter rallies and club events, the most recent being for VFM at last year's August bank holiday scooter rally on the Isle of Wight. By popular demand Smoove & Turrell are set to play for VFM in Scarborough over the Easter bank holiday. It's high time we sat down for a chat...





Sarge: When did you start in the music industry and how did Smoove & Turrell begin?

Smoove: I was DJing in Newcastle in 2000, playing soul and funk, we invited guest DJs such as Andy Smith and Eddie Piller to come and play. I got to meet some of my heroes who, after working alongside them, became friends. Eddie talked about doing something with me on Acid Jazz, but I said I'd make him a new album. I met keyboardist Mike Porter on the local scene and invited him to be part of the Smoove live project, the end result was Dead Men's Shirts on Acid Jazz. After that had run its course, which involved some big festivals in the UK and Europe, we started working on some new ideas at Mike's house. By chance we heard a band rehearsing in a garage close to Mike's,

and the singer had a rock-style voice, with soulfully sublime delivery. After hearing them from a distance a couple of times, we went and knocked on the door. The singer was John Turrell, we had a chat and hit it off. That's how Smoove & Turrell began, as a trio. With new ideas and a new direction, we went for a fresh start. When we were pitching Smoove & Turrell's debut album *Antique Soul*, there was interest from four or five labels but we went with Jalapeno because they're UK based. Prior to the album coming out, German label Club Tikka released a limited edition vinyl single, *I Can't Give You Up*, which was recorded in Mike's utility room, that was in 2009. We went from a trio into a full band, which was quite a quick upsize, to play live. We've since released six studio albums, and we've played countless live dates and tours.

Sarge: Your debut single drew a lot of positive attention from Mods, scooterists and even from elements of the Northern Soul scene. Is there any connection to those within Smoove & Turrell?

Smoove: *I Can't Give You Up* was called Northern Soul by some when it first came out. It was never something we aimed for, although with John's soulful voice and the sound it has, there are some elements there. Mike has always had a bit of a leaning towards the Mod scene, dressing sharp. I do like some of that look myself, especially Italian knit tops. My roots are in hip-hop, which has its own scene, as does punk and Mod too. Is Mod a scene or an attitude these days, I think it's probably more an attitude than a single scene?

Living in the North East there's an independence, where localish scenes can develop, and there's a thriving band scene, as we all know you don't have to be London based to succeed. Like-minded people can create their own scenes. Smoove & Turrell don't see ourselves as a part of any particular scene, we make music, we enjoy making music and we seem to be making music that appeals to lots of people.

We're not part of any of those scenes, but appreciate that our music has some appeal to people that are.



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Sarge: Over the past 12 years, Smoove & Turrell have played a number of scooter rallies and club events. What's your favourite scooterist event (that you've played) so far?

Smoove: One of, if not, the first national press attention we ever had was with *Scooter* magazine around about the time *I Can't Give You Up* was released. I've still got that issue, somewhere. There have been more than a few scooter events we've played since then, I love playing the

scooter events, there's always a proper old-school vibe, loads of people up for a party and having a good time. We really enjoy playing them, even though it can be a bit of a weird one, something of a challenge to rise to. A lot of the bands we've played with at scooter rallies are covers bands, often we're on last following a band that's had people jumping around and singing along to all of their set. The challenge for us, as we play mainly our own material, is to win the crowd over. Every scooter event and rally we've played has been an enjoyable experience, each one seems to feel even better than the previous one. With that in mind, my favourite so far must be the one we did for VFM on the Isle of Wight last August.

Sarge: Your current album *Stratos Bleu* has been out for three years now, unlike previous Smoove & Turrell albums, it has something of a 90s rave leaning to it?

Smoove: We're still doing a few dates on the back of it at the moment. When we gave the finished album to the record company they weren't 100% convinced with its makeup. It wasn't a complete change in direction for us, though some of the electronica in there embraced elements of the dance rave sounds of the 90s, it was a deliberate move to avoid complacency. Mike got to indulge himself a bit by using analogue synthesisers. Then the Covid lockdown hit us, which could've been problematic, yet probably worked in our favour. A lot of people turned to music to get them through the bad times. *Stratos Bleu* went to number one in the dance album chart as well as making an impact on the top 40 albums chart. Since the lockdown has lifted we've played some live shows and tours on the back of it, most of them during 2022.

Sarge: What's in the pipeline for 2023 for Smoove & Turrell?

Smoove: There's our new album which is already half done, that'll be our seventh studio album. It doesn't have a title yet but



it'll continue in a similar direction to *Stratos Bleu*, though there won't be as much of the dance rave feel this time, it's a mix of soul, funk and electronica with a gritty realism.

We've not too many fixed dates at the moment, our intention is to spend January and February recording the new album and produce a radio-friendly single to support its release, hopefully sometime in the spring. We've always travelled and played a lot around the UK, and we're looking forward to getting back out there live from early springtime onwards. One of the first dates we've got booked is for VFM at the Easter scooter rally in Scarborough.

Sarge: Finally, what can we expect at the VFM Easter weekend in Scarborough from Smoove & Turrell?

Smoove: With the untitled new album having been recorded by then we'll be looking to test out some of the new songs, probably three new songs will be unveiled, and we'll be revisiting some of the old stuff too. Songs like *Beggarman*, *I'm a Man* and *I Can't Give You Up* will, of course, be in there – they're standards of ours and live favourites too, mainstays of our set. Besides it wouldn't be a Smoove & Turrell scooter rally appearance without them.

Expect to have a great time. We will – it's one we're really looking forward to playing.

Words: Sarge

Images: courtesy of Smoove & Turrell

Smoove & Turrell can be seen at the Scarborough Spa on Saturday, April 8, tickets from: www.vfmscoot.co.uk
www.smooveandturrell.com





“ I love playing the scooter events, there's always a proper old-school vibe, loads of people up for a party and having a good time. ”



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★ STAR LETTER ★

One step beyond?

Hi Stan,

Let's kick off by saying that I totally agree with the statements in the Christmas edition in that it's really great to hear that all scooters are gaining acceptance in the scene, be they Bajaj Chetak, LML, Modena or Milano etc. This is certainly a healthy way forward and should be commended. But, here's where the inevitable 'however' comes in.

The pre-mentioned edition featured quite a bit of promotion of the Italjet Dragster, describing it as a scooter. Now, readers will have probably seen these bikes corporately promoted on Facebook pages, with many reader comments that while being a great motorcycle, these are indeed motorcycles and not scooters. Interestingly, Italjet has responded to this on Facebook by fully agreeing that these are NOT scooters, a statement with which I tend to agree.

Hence you may understand my confusion at these motorcycles (as seemingly identified as such by the manufacturers) featuring in *Scooter*. This is not to say that there's anything whatsoever wrong with the Dragster, in fact it looks to be an excellent motorcycle and very well designed.

The question is, should it be represented as a scooter?

Personally, and I don't regard myself as a luddite in this respect, I tend to agree with the view that this would be a step too far, or 'One step beyond' if you prefer.

Richard Bambridge

Hi Richard

I think you raise a really interesting point and I'm always very aware of risking 'mission creep' in the machines that we cover. Although the Dragster 125/180 seem to be finding a niche among scooterists, the 500 is a difficult beast to place, even Dragster say it creates a new category of vehicle. My mantra for the magazine is, 'if it goes on at a scooter rally, it can go into the magazine.'

The writer of our Star Letter this month wins a pair of Weise Montana 150 Gloves with an RRP of £119.99. These waterproof gloves provide maximum warmth and minimal bulk, thanks to the 150-gram Thinsulate® Supreme lining, which is secured with mcFit® Technology, so it won't pull out. Find out more at www.weiseclothing.com

At the moment my thoughts on your question are that, as the Dragster's of interest, when we get the chance to test the 500 we will. Having presented the facts it'll be up to scooterists as to whether we feature it again or leave it to bike mags.
Stan



500cc too far?

Horses for courses

Hi there,

When I was looking to get back into scootering after many years away, I was faced with a choice: do I spend £5k on a restored example of an original Lammy or buy a brand new 'Lammy look-a-like' RA? (I'm not a Vespa fan.) When I thought about it further, the prospect of constant fettling of the two-stroke engine and remembering how many times my SX150 let me down when I owned it, led me to purchase a Royal Alloy GP300 in March 2021. I must say I haven't regretted it one bit!

All the mod cons (EFI, ABS, efficient water-cooled engine, LED lights etc) plus car-like service intervals and the

unbelievably smooth ride make every journey a pleasure. Of course, to Lammy 'purists' it will never be a 'proper' scooter but, to be honest, 95% of Lammy owners are fine and compliment me on the look of my scoot, and I appreciate the time and effort that keeps the classic Lammys on the road.

I always say that anything that gets people into, or back into, the scooter scene is to be applauded and, judging by the number of posts on the RA sites about March 1 registrations, there will be lots more RAs at rideouts and rallies this year!

Oh, and finally, what other 'moped' can do 85mph in standard trim?

Paul Dock

Hi Paul,

I'm glad you're enjoying your Royal Alloy, as you say they're a different riding and owning experience to a classic two-stroke. I'm fortunate to have a selection of scooters at my disposal and tend to pick and choose according to the journey I'm going to make. Being honest that means if I need to guarantee being somewhere on time I'll take my GTS, but I'll also admit there's nothing like the joy of completing a challenging trip on one of my classic two-strokes. Have a great summer!

Stan



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Some 'over the pond' graffiti from Jason Robles in Whittier, California.



Geoff Parker's grandsons are keeping the faith.



Stuart Goodin from Angmering, West Sussex sent in this very atmospheric shot of his PX.



This PX125 (180) belonging to Keith Edwards is shining and ready for the new season.



This trio of Vespas belongs to Kris Ward: Motovespa DN200 - 1984, Glanfield Baldet Vespa 150 Sprint - 1969 and Vespa GTS 300 - 2022.



Parts may be getting scarcer but John Webster's LML 4t just keeps on rolling.



Alan Keeling's Wildcat carrying off a blue and yellow scheme to perfection.



Dave Wilkinson's all ready for summer.



As his lovely cutdown proves, Jarrad Wearne's a dab hand with the angle grinder.



The sun shining on one of the most stylish pieces of metal ever designed; Andy Rees' GP200.



Philip Dunn's Li230 TS1 and 'Trippy Mickey' in Colchester.



This recently restored 1966 Lambretta 125 Special belongs to Baz Hulme, seen here attending the Clitheroe scooter rally last year.



Fraser Ross, "with the love of my life, and the wife..."

Least crap snap



THIS MONTH'S WINNER: Dean of Pontefract SC sent in this shot which perfectly sums up dark night club riding.

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Send Us a Postcard



It may not be ideal riding weather in the UK but don't forget to keep your photos coming. This month we look back on a trip to Indonesia but we're really looking forward to seeing where the new season takes you. Just drop Stan a line and we'll do the rest: stan@scootering.com

Indonesian adventure

If you think Europe has a monopoly on scooterist culture you've never been to Indonesia. Thomas Dirks from Germany sent us this very special postcard from the Indonesian Scooter Festival

It all started with a book called *Vespa Extreme* from Indonesia. The book revealed a huge Vespa scene in Indonesia, with strange varieties and bizarre concoctions powered by Vespa engines. I was fascinated and resolved that one day I'd see them for myself. Time passed and I saw a post on a European scooter forum where contributors were discussing the poor quality of Indonesian Vespas that were being offered for sale on European markets. One guy, Franz, responded by saying that the Indonesians would only sell scooters that couldn't be used any more in Indonesia and that's why the quality was so poor. I asked him how he knew this, and he responded by saying that he lived in Indonesia and has family in Jakarta.



The Gembel is a very Indonesian phenomenon.



Thomas and Paul at the greatest show on Earth, or at least Indonesia.

Go big or go home

In a private chat I got to know Franz and told him that I was very interested in the Indonesian scooter scene and would like to attend a rally. He invited me to Jakarta and things developed from there. I am a member of the Grimsby scooter club and asked my friend Paul to join me. In contrast to the UK, rallies in Indonesia are not announced at the beginning of a year, so I searched social media for the biggest rally I could find. Eventually, only four months before it happened, the Indonesian Scooter Festival was announced. My first plan was to ride the 600km from Jakarta (where we'd arrive at the airport) to the event at Yogyakarta. Because of traffic and road conditions it soon became obvious this wouldn't be possible in the week we'd planned to stay in Indonesia.

It took Paul and me 25 hours to fly from Amsterdam to Jakarta on a cheap (€620) flight with Saudia Air. This went without any problems but we did get our tins of beer confiscated in Jeddah! We were collected by Franz at the airport and he drove us to his house where the rented scooters were waiting.

Finding a classic scooter had been a problem because nobody wanted to rent them out, but Franz had managed to find some at €20 per day. He gave me a Vespa Sprint from 1974 and Paul got a PS from the 80s, which is an Indonesian variant of a PX, the main difference being the headlight. The weather was beautiful, 30C during the day and 25C at night. Although on most afternoons there was heavy rain for about three hours.

Life on the road

Next day we began riding around Jakarta and when we had a little break at the side of the road for a smoke, we saw our first Vespa Gembel. The Gembel looks like a bamboo garden shed with a Vespa engine strapped to it. We asked the boys how long they had been riding, and they answered "3000km," unsurprisingly they were heading to the same festival as us. The traffic in Jakarta was horrendous. The amount of scooters on the streets was unbelievable and we were mixed in with motorcycles, cars, trucks, buses and even traditional horses while all the time coaches roared by. At night-time many



These scooters wooden go...



“The Indonesian Scooter Festival is held over a Saturday and Sunday, but nothing closes for the whole 48 hours, it’s just one long party.”



One long party.



scooters ride without lights, sometimes on the wrong side of the road. It's not unusual to see a scooter heading straight towards you with a whole family on board. The biggest hazard though are scooters carrying large gas bottles or with long steel bars hanging off both front and rear.

We decided to take the night train from Jakarta to Kebumen and put our scooters into the train's freight car train (€12 night ticket, €60 shipping). We arrived in Kebumen at 6am and headed off on the scooters to Jogja, a journey of 106km that took until 2pm.





A snip at €40,000.



We could have covered the distance more quickly, but the scenery was so beautiful that we had to stop. One particularly memorable place was where we crossed rice fields to see the ocean and rest at a little fishing village. In Jogjakarta we booked into a little hotel with pool and a beautiful yard (€20 pp!) We parked up inside the fenced yard, had a beer and then we saddled up again to ride into the festival.

Festival people

At the festival everyone was very friendly and curious, probably because we were the only Europeans around. A huge number of scooters were parked there but other riders made space for our scooters right in front of the main entrance. We felt very honoured at the way they treated us.

The festival takes place at the Jogja Expo Center, Jogjakarta and although we'd already bought tickets on the net, you can purchase them at the main entrance for about €8. The Indonesian scooter festival is held over a Saturday and Sunday, but nothing closes for the whole 48 hours, it's just one long party.

Inside the Expo Center was a big exhibition with a large number of scooters inside. Something I'd never seen before were scooters with their frame, mudguard and headset all made from wood. The Indonesian scooter scene is huge and although many models were produced in Indonesia, those imported from Europe can be very expensive indeed. We saw some European Vespas; a German Hoffmann GS and two SS 90s, one of which was for sale at €40,000! There was also a stand with a

Hoffman GS Vespa that had been fitted with an electric engine and I was invited for a test ride. I found this tricky because the engine responded a second after applying the throttle, I think this would be quite dangerous on corners and not my cup of tea.

To the right of the Expo Center is an open area with a stage for the live bands, parts market, little food stalls and soft drinks. On the second day, we managed to find a little stand with beer but at the main entrance youngsters were hanging around in their scooter club outfits, totally drunk on their home brewed 'arak' and 'sopi'; made from the sap of palm trees. If you come to this part of the world be warned, this home brew is topped up with methyl alcohol and I heard bells ringing in my brain for days afterwards.

First photos from Mars will probably show an AF replica...



Scooterist and culture in perfect harmony.





Crossover culture

There's usually comment about facilities at British Nationals but here most people just slept on the ground. I was surprised that there is a big reggae and ska scene in Indonesia, with many of the live bands performing recognisable tunes but in their own language. Other British influences can be seen everywhere; Peaky Blinders caps are in fashion and could be purchased at the venue. Many Indonesian scooterists look like English dockworkers or Rastas with long dreadlocks.

When the main band finished, we plunged into the night life of Jogja. The food was amazing, you can't go wrong ordering 'nasi', which means rice dish. Live music was being played everywhere with bars selling a wide variety of beer. My favourite being Singaraja. Smokers will be intrigued to learn that cigarettes are all flavoured with spices; strange but interesting, while Gudang Garam cigarettes were very strong indeed. We found the Indonesian people to be very friendly and with 260 million Muslims, they are the world's largest Muslim population. Their culture is very tolerant and even at night time women were socialising in pubs and bars without experiencing any problems. Everyone is very curious and love to take photos with European guests. It was also nice to see that young Indonesians respect the elderly and greet strangers in a very respectful way. The icing on the cake for this trip was visiting the Buddhist temples of Prambanan, an hour by car away from Jogjakarta. This huge temple dating from the 8th century ended the trip with a fascinating insight into Indonesia's past.

I'd dreamed of making this trip for a long time and it lived up to my expectations in every way, next on my 'to do' list is the Java Scooter Rendezvous.

With thanks to my travel companions Franz, Paul, Kepinn, Whesley and Arthur.

Thomas Dirks, Germany

“ I was surprised that there is a big reggae and ska scene in Indonesia, with many of the live bands performing recognisable tunes but in their own language. ”



Not the usual European parts fair.



It's not all motorways and crowded streets.



No laughing matter?

Depending on your point of view they're either the embodiment of 'comedy Mod' culture or an inexpensive introduction to the world of scooters, but what's it like to own a Modena? In this month's Budget Scooter feature Stan reflects on his time spent as the custodian of a Modena.

There are plenty of laughs to be had while working for *Scooter* magazine, but it's also a responsibility. If we say that something's good, you've every right to expect that we've tested it properly, and if we say something's bad the manufacturer's quite right to expect the same. Testing is in *Scooter*'s DNA and that's how, a few years ago, I came to be the custodian of an AJS Modena.

I've shared this with a few people over a pint or two, but I have a theory as to what the 'motorcycle' industry needs to reinvent itself. It's a theory that works best if you're full of alcohol and grew up in the late 1970s or early 1980s, because I believe we need a new 'FS1E'. By that I don't mean a modern interpretation of Yamaha's teenage racer designed to suit middle-aged men wanting to relive their youth; I mean an entry level motorcycle that's both revolutionary and affordable. Only something like this will

entice the next generation of riders to the magical world of two wheels. If you follow the basic thrust of my argument, you'll realise that what I think the scooter industry needs is a 21st century version of the Vespa 50 Special. I thought that might be the AJS Modena, so a couple of years ago I persuaded AJS to lend me one.

In, or on, the saddle

I'll spare the name of the dealer who supplied the loan scooter, mainly because he didn't want to part with the machine I'd been allocated. This came from the first batch of EFI machines to be imported and he was concerned that there hadn't been enough time to work through any production glitches. As he waved me off, I could see him look wistfully at his choice for the test, a six-month-old naturally aspirated version that, in his words, "ran like clockwork".

My first thoughts were that it was an odd riding position; it's 35mm wider than

a (modern) Primavera but the seat sits 10mm lower. In global terms that's nothing, but it made me feel as if I was sitting 'in' the scooter rather than on it. While talking statistics the Modena weighs in at only 95 kilos, a full 20kg less than the Primavera but has a wheelbase that's 20mm longer. The result is a very light scooter that's not particularly nimble. In terms of real life performance, if you've ever ridden a standard Vespa 90 then it's easy to imagine what the Modena's like on the throttle. If you haven't, well, it's nippy enough in town but on the open road let's say that you won't be at risk of getting too many speeding tickets.

The Modena's light weight is the product of it being clad entirely in plastic and the panel lines are tight. It's for good reason that they're known in parts of the trade as 'creakies' but if you're paying just over £2k for a brand new scooter with a warranty, it's unreasonable to expect Piaggio build quality.

Interval training

The thing that attracts me to scooters is that there are so many ways to enjoy them, and for me that means riding long distances. While others may tour Europe on large-capacity adventure bikes, I like nothing more than seeing how far a set of 10in wheels can take me.

Even though I'd taken delivery of my Modena in late September, I was determined to take a trip but with typical scooterist planning I'd no idea where this would take me. I'd a hankering to take the 'Modena to Modena' but was also conscious of the weather. Eventually I decided to cross the Channel and then choose whether to head south for the Alps, or cross one off my bucket list and take tour of the Normandy battlefields. One thing I deliberately chose to ignore were the Modena's service intervals. The air-cooled GY6 engine needs its first service at 1500 miles and this needs following up every 2500 miles thereafter.

Regular maintenance is important as, over time, the valve clearance will close, leading to a marked reduction in power. That's something to consider if your plan is to regularly tuck a few rallies and a bit of commuting under your belt.

Tripping

My plan was to head down to AJS HQ near Andover, meet the team and then head down to Poole. There I'd take the ferry to Cherbourg and decide on my next step. Determined to get in as many miles as possible I set off from Sheffield before dawn, rode the M1 down to the Midlands, and then travelled across country to Andover.

The motorway section was predictably awful. Only the scarcity of traffic made the Modena's top speed tolerable, and I was pleased to get on to some A and B roads where the little scooter came into its own. By the time I'd breakfasted near Triumph's Meriden factory I was quite enjoying myself. The only downside was the Modena's woefully small tank; with luggage and my bulk the poor little thing was barely managing 50 miles or so before caution dictated a fill-up.



Team AJS.

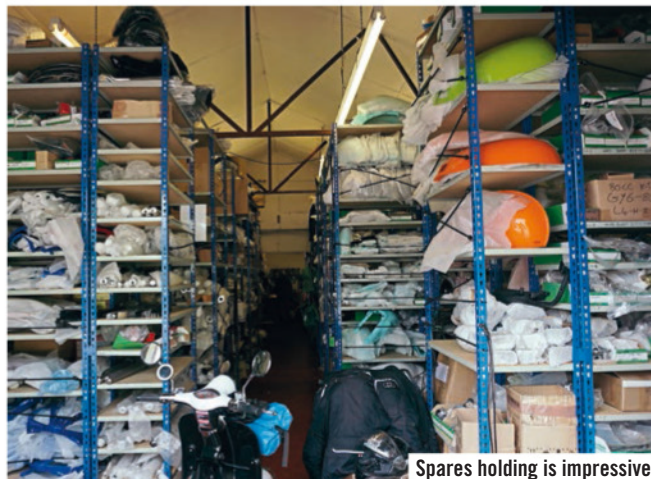


And he's off!

“ There are, and always have been, a significant number of potential scooterists who want the reassurance of a warranty and dealer back-up but can't afford the admission price required by Piaggio or Royal Alloy. ”



RAC going above and beyond.



Spares holding is impressive.

As I counted down the last few miles to AJS HQ, the scooter suddenly fell silent. I was now on country roads and with a knowledge of the AJS's systems that amounted to zero, I suddenly felt very alone. Not knowing what to expect I rang Nick Brown, AJS's managing director. He instantly diagnosed the problem as a blown fuse, picked one off the shelf and joined me on the country lane. A quick fuse change and a few minutes later I was enjoying a brew at their HQ.

Although AJS enthusiasts no doubt argue about the brand's history in the same way that scooterists do about Lambretta, the fact is that AJS has always been a British owned company. The current dynasty took control in 1974, when 'Fluff' Brown, AJS's competition manager, bought the company from Norton-Villiers. It's his family that now runs the business, which supplies a range of Asian-produced motorcycles under the AJS banner.

As Nick gave me the guided tour, I was impressed by the amount of spares held at the Andover warehouse, and to some extent this is where the Modena's success lies. Replacement parts are unbelievably cheap. If the engine fails outside of warranty a brand new GY6 engine can be delivered to your door from eBay for around £600, throw a Modena down the road and the plastic will probably shatter but a set of legshields (supplied ready to fit in a variety of colours) will set you back £80, a side panel £60. It's possible to replace the entire set of bodywork for less than the cost of painting most classic

scooters. That's important for a novice rider who is probably going to drop the scooter at some point. Factor in the supply of generic parts from companies such as Chinese Motorcycle Parts Online and it's easy to see that a Modena isn't expensive to run.

Tripping, part deux

Having been, literally, waved off by Nick and the team I made my way down to Poole, where I was booked on to the next morning's ferry to Cherbourg. I blew another fuse on the way, but reasoned that this was simply an overloaded engine. By this point it had been running, almost nonstop, for around 15 hours.

However, I was out of excuses the next morning when the scooter came to a complete halt just short of the ferry terminal. This time a fuse made no difference. The Modena was dead, and I'd no option but to call for recovery. Like anyone who's summoned roadside assistance I've had mixed experiences but on this occasion the RAC guy went above and beyond anything I could have expected. Having explained my situation he went through the electrics with a finetooth comb, finally diagnosing that part of the loom had been routed badly, fracturing a wire, and causing an intermittent fault. With the wire fixed and my ferry booking changed to the next day I took the Modena for a little scoot around Dorset, the sun was out, and the engine ran perfectly. I'd a smile on my face and the afternoon was exactly what I'd hoped to experience.



Main fuse: this became a regular sight.

The following morning, I boarded the ferry and having exchanged the usual "You must be joking" comments from a biker, settled in to enjoy the crossing. Unfortunately, the long range forecast wasn't good. A weather front was heading up from the south, bringing wind and rain. Although the 'Modena to Modena' adventure still had a nice ring about it, the reality was that a safe crossing of the Alps looked increasingly unlikely.

By the time we'd docked in Cherbourg I'd formed a rough plan. I'd ride down to St Mere Eglise, 'ground zero' for the D-Day landings and home to a museum I'd long wanted to visit. From there I'd head south to Saint-Lô, find a B 'n' B and consider my options. If the weather looked bad I was still on the D-Day trail, and if it had improved I could continue south.

Once again the little Modena purred along, we weren't breaking any land speed records but that's not the point of scooter touring. It took around an hour and half of enjoyable riding to arrive at St Mere Eglise, where I had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon pottering around the museums and shops. As I prepared to depart for Saint-Lô it started to drizzle, just wet enough to cross the line where waterproofs were needed. The Modena responded happily to a prod of the starter, and we set off on our journey southward. With only a few kilometres left before reaching Saint-Lô, I was looking forward to a nice shower and studying my St Mere Eglise souvenirs when the engine died. By now I was in a routine, with the bag of fuses and a screwdriver stowed ready for action in the side locker for easy access. Incidentally, this isn't the equivalent of a Vespa 150 Super's capacious side blister, a small bag of tools and it's full. In fact, internal storage is an issue on the Modena as the underseat bucket isn't much larger than that of a Vespa smallframe. However, the scooter does come with front and rear racks as standard. Swings and roundabouts, but I digress, let's get back to the story.

Having replaced the fuse I got back in the saddle, pressed the starter and nothing happened. I tried another fuse, nothing. Made sure the lever switches were clean, nothing. Made sure the sidestand was up, nothing. Just as I'd resigned myself to diagnose the problem by starting at the



Plan? What plan?



The end is nigh.



Maybe I'll try a Cushman next time...

“ Although the ‘Modena to Modena’ adventure still had a nice ring about it, the reality was that a safe crossing of the Alps looked increasingly unlikely. ”

plug and working backwards, the heavens opened. This was the type of rain that made waterproofs irrelevant, the type of rain that hit the road hard before bouncing back into the sky and coming back to have a second stab at soaking me. I was about a third of the way up a hill and the camber was doing its job of clearing water from the dual carriageway and on to the hard shoulder. Soon the Modena and I found ourselves in a small stream and just as I ran down the hard shoulder to retrieve a glove that had been swept away, two highway workers pulled up. This, they announced, was no place for a broken-down scooter. I had to agree. I also agreed with the Gendarmes who stopped and made the same point but more forcibly.

It was on that hard shoulder, just outside Saint-Lô, that I bade farewell to the Modena. This time the European recovery insurance kicked in. I got home thanks to a hire car and the Modena followed behind a few weeks later. Understandably AJS wanted to know what had gone wrong and it took them about 10 minutes to find the problem. On my Modena the loom had been secured with metal ties (like a Lambretta). The one nearest the top of the steering column had been fitted slightly too high and far too tightly. Each movement of the headset had seen the tie ‘saw’ into the loom by a fraction, causing an intermittent short. Outside Saint-Lô the cut had been terminal.

“You can buy a PX for that...”

What's my take on this period of Modena ownership? Actually, it was more pleasant than I'd expected. Had we used the ‘known’ scooter suggested by the dealer, or waited for the EFI's glitches to be worked through thoroughly (and I'd set off with a proper plan) I think the outcome would have been very different. At around £2k the Modena offers an affordable way to dip a toe into the world of scootering, but I must concede to those who'll say that for the same money



Au revoir...

it's possible to buy a PX125. However, that argument misses something important. Not everyone wants to spend the weekend tinkering in a garage to keep their scooter on the road, and any £2k two-stroke will require some tinkering. There are, and always have been, a significant number of potential scooterists who want the reassurance of a warranty and dealer back-up but can't afford the admission price required by Piaggio or Royal Alloy. For those on a tighter budget but who are willing to take a risk on an older machine there are bargains galore. As I type these words there's a three-year-old Modena listed on eBay for £795. Even if it needs £500 spending on it, that's a road-going

scooter for barely the equivalent of a basket case classic.

Admittedly there are compromises that come with a ‘budget’ scooter; build quality and service intervals being prominent among them, but they're not a problem if a buyer walks into the deal with their eyes wide open. Unfortunately I don't think the Modena is the new FS1E, nor do I think it's the new 50 Special but, if cash is tight, and the plan isn't to cross continents on it, the Modena can be a lot of fun; and isn't having a laugh what scooters are supposed to be all about?

Words and images: Stan





Bruce Lee- full on

In recent years the number of freshly created 'full blown' custom scooters has decreased to a trickle, but Dave Hamilton's determined to prove that there's life left in the genre.



As the owner of Apocalypse, another full-blown Lambretta, Dave Hamilton is no stranger to custom scooter projects. It's fair to say that Apocalypse has been around for a few years now, but with upgrades and improvements it's remained a popular sight on the custom scooter scene. However, Dave's afflicted with the 'building disease'. A phenomenon to which many custom scooter builders succumb, having pushed a project to its limits they seek a fresh challenge, and in Dave's case Bruce Lee is the result.

The Kid

To understand how this project came to be, and the meticulous attention to detail with which it's been executed, we'll have to rewind back a few years to Dave's childhood; before scooters came into his life. When Dave was growing up, he was a fan of Bruce Lee and in pride of place on his bedroom wall was an original Bruce Lee, Enter the Dragon movie poster. This instilled a lifelong obsession with the legendary martial artist and actor; it's now fair to say that Dave's watched every Bruce Lee movie numerous times and his knowledge of the martial arts legend is encyclopaedic.

It was after watching another movie, Quadrophonia, that scooters came into

Dave's life. Perhaps a combination of the two films was inevitable and it just took Dave a few decades to realise it.

The process of the development of this scooter is a masterclass in time management, effort, patience and attention to detail. The journey that Dave's taken to complete this project hasn't been an easy one and as you'd expect with a project as detailed as this there have been a few bumps along the way. However, knowing how close this project was to his heart, Dave kept his eye firmly focused on the objectives, and with the help of some of the country's top specialists he's produced a machine that's packed with quality and detail.

The Wise Guys Who Fool Around

As well as having encyclopaedic knowledge of the theme, another factor which also helped Dave with the project management was his previous experience of developing custom scooters. This experience has taught him that two things are needed, a clear vision and a team of people that are capable of bringing that to life. The roll call of people involved in the creation of Bruce Lee is a roll call of contemporary excellence and includes Adi Clark, Richard Coveney, Col Fitzgerald, Paul Gillow, Keith Newman and Karl Russell.

The Way of the Dragon

As the initial inspiration for the project started with an original Enter the Dragon movie poster, that's exactly where we'll start our detailed tour. The art on the legshields shows each side of the Enter the Dragon poster, while the horncast, so skilfully engraved by Adi Clark, connects the two elements perfectly.

Not content to let the engraving tell the whole story, Dave's enabled the dragon's eyes to illuminate by using red LEDs and its scaled body has gold and green gold running along it. Here, Bruce Lee appears in rose gold, courtesy of Quality Chrome, and elements of his face, head and body have been picked out by Col Fitzgerald's fine-grain brushwork. The headset is another jaw-dropping combination of art and engraving. Bringing life to the design are a pair of nunchaku handlebar grips, which introduce an aggressive element to the theme and open the gateway for more martial arts weapons to feature throughout the scooter.

One of the most striking features of the scooter – and face facts, you can't miss it – is the centrally mounted fuel tank. This, along with the majority of the other bespoke components, was expertly crafted by Keith Newman (K2). While its form is



SCOOTER SPECIFICATION

Name of scooter: Bruce Lee.

Scooter model: GP150.

Time to build & by who: About 10 years. Dave Harrison (Dog Speed), Keith Newman (K2 Customs), Richard Coveney (RDC), Adi Clark (engraving), Paul (Oiltek) and Colin Fitzgerald (Garage Artwerks).

Has it won any trophies: 2022 Isle of Wight – Best Lambretta, Best murals. NY500 – Best in Show, Best Lambretta and Punter's Choice. Rat Run 10 – Best Lambretta. Cheeky Monkeys – Best Lambretta.

ENGINE SPEC

Kit: Casa 265T.

Crank: Casa.

Carb: 34mil Dell'Orto.

Exhaust: Protti.

Clutch: Casa.

Gearbox: Casa (5-speed Cyclone).

Brakes: Front disc: Casa. Rear disc: Scooter the Fero.

Suspension: Front, Lambretta Targa Line dampers. Rear, Casa adjustable shocker.

Who did the dyno work?: Dynoed by Warren Wilkinson (Dewsbury) 40bhp – torque 25ft-lb.

What's it like to ride?: It's like riding on a cloud; it's the best set-up I've ever ridden.

Frame spec: Paintwork and murals by: Richard Coveney (RDC) and Colin Fitzgerald (Garage Artwerks).

Engraving by: Adi Clark.

Powder coating by: Nil.

Chrome by: Karl Russell – Quality Chrome.

Seat by: Joseph Leathersmith.

What was the hardest part of the project: Waiting.

Do you have any advice or tech tips for anyone starting a project:

Don't get too disheartened if things don't go exactly how you want them to straight away. Be patient, it's worth it in the end.

Is there anyone you wish to thank:

Dave Harrison (Dogspeed), Paul (Oiltek), Keith Newman (K2 Customs specialised parts), Adi Clark (engraving), Richard Coveney (paint) and Colin Fitzgerald (artwork) all for going the extra mile. The Haworth boys for the finishing touches (Paul and Ian) and Carol Gibbons for her support.



unmistakably oriental it also fulfils several functions, not least of which is feeding the thirsty Casa SST 265 lump that stalks beneath the panels. With so much surface area, the tank also acts as suitable canvas for Col to complete an amazing set of murals depicting scenes from Bruce's Green Hornet movie. A throwing star completes the petrol tank while a hidden fuel line runs under the legshields to the engine. Keen-eyed observers will note that in addition to this centreline tank there's also a standard Lambretta tank, but don't be fooled. This has been sectioned internally with part of it holding the electric and another housing a supply of two-stroke.

Walking around the scooter the excellence of Keith, Adi and Col's work can be seen at every turn. The murals flow easily across Richard Coveney's base coat, illustrating Lee's complex character with a mixture of violent and tranquil imagery.

As always with a scooter of this type, it's the details that count. Here both Keith and Adi have excelled themselves; the sword hilt stand and dragon footpegs may leap into view but the entire scooter is a study in carefully thought out, executed and applied craftsmanship.

The Big Boss

While murals and paint make a good custom scooter, no super custom is complete without an insanely tuned engine. In Bruce Lee's case this is a full Casa 265 kit, with Cyclone 5 gearbox, 34mm Dell'Orto carb and Protti expansion chamber. It's a package that turns out 40bhp, hence the large tank, but Dave describes it as: "Like riding on a cloud; it's the best set-up I've ever ridden."

With 40bhp to control it's no use squeezing madly on a set of drums and hoping for the best. Applying Bruce's belief

that "the less effort, the faster and more powerful you will be", the Lambretta's brakes have been suitably upgraded with a Casa hydraulic disc up front and a rear hydraulic set up by Scooter the Fero bringing up the rear.

This machine has been a long time in the making, so there's a lot to be said for that poster that Dave had on his bedroom wall all those years back.

The final outcome is a fitting tribute to a martial arts legend. While the full-blown custom scooter is an increasingly rare creature, Dave has shown that there's still scope to push the boundaries of design. There's one final Bruce Lee quote that sums this up perfectly: "There are no limits. There are only plateaus, and you must not stay there, you must go beyond them."

Words: Stu Smith

Photos: Gary Chapman



OWNER DETAILS

Name: Dave Hamilton.

Scooter club: Bradford Night Owls.

What was your first scooter, when did you get it and how did you first become interested in them: In 1979 when I was 16-17 years old I watched Quadrophenia and that set things going.

What was your first rally: Scarborough 1980.

Any interesting or funny scooter stories: In 2014 we were going to the Scarborough National Rally when we got stuck in a traffic jam on the A64. Me and my mates pulled out to the right and filtered through the line of traffic. We'd got about two miles when we realised that one of our group was missing. We pulled in and eventually, two pints later, he caught us up. The problem was that his scooter was loaded up with lights and mirrors and he couldn't squeeze through the gap between the cars!!!

Your favourite custom/featured scooter of all time: Spirit Walker.

“

The roll call of people involved in the creation of Bruce Lee is a roll call of contemporary excellence and includes Adi Clark, Richard Coveney, Col Fitzgerald, Paul Gillow, Keith Newman and Karl Russell.

”



SCOOTERING.COM







FROM A CUB TO A LYON

The Chris Forster story – Part One

Chris Forster's riding career spanned the golden years of scooter racing and we've secured exclusive access to his archive. This month Stu Owen describes the apprenticeship of a 1970s scooter racer.

The late 1960s was a great time to be a Lambretta owner – that was if you didn't mind something second-hand. Although it was possible to walk into a showroom and buy a brand-new Grand Prix model, at least £200 was needed to buy a 150cc variant; even more so for the all-conquering 200. With the average weekly wage being around £18 if you were a school leaver, chances are that a first scooter would be bought from the classified section of the local newspaper, where there were literally dozens to choose from. So it was for 16-year-old Mancunian Chris Forster and for him, it was a life-changing moment.

Flying along

Saving hard, he had acquired enough money to fund the purchase of an Li150 Series 3. He really wanted a Grand Prix, but for the time being that didn't matter. In truth Chris really wanted a motorcycle, but having lost an uncle in a motorcycle accident, his parents insisted on a scooter. Like many

parents of the era they saw it as a much safer option.

The main reason for buying the Li was transporting him to work in Woodford, a few miles from where he lived in Stockport, Greater Manchester, and where he'd started working as an apprentice for Hawker Siddeley Aviation. Taking great pride in his steed, each day he would make sure it was placed under cover in the factory bike sheds where he noticed other Lambrettas parked up. Keen to be involved, Chris put his machine next to them, a row of four neatly prepared Grand Prix models. Little did he know that by doing so, it would shape his future.

Taking order

It only took until lunchtime on the first day he'd shared their parking bay for the owners of the GPs to hunt Chris down. The four of them – John Osbourne, Andy Chad, Nick Evans and Frazer Burgess – were a year or two older than him and members of the Manchester Lyons. Then, as now, it



The British championship was beginning to take off with meetings being held all over the country.

was a well-known and respected club with strong links to scooter sport. These were talented riders who would compete in any racing discipline. The nervous 16-year-old stood before them, awaiting his fate, and they told him to join the Manchester Lyons. Chris recalls: "They told me where to go. It was more of a 'royal command' than an invitation. I remember thinking that I'd better do what they said."



Setting off on 'Superheap' at his first Isle of Man event in 1972.



Mallory Park was a hive of activity on the Saturday morning as the riders prepared for the day's racing.

“ Right from the start, he was in the thick of it, bump-starting machines, holding spanners and being wherever he was needed, but that was as close to racing as he'd get for a while. ”

The following Monday, he turned up at the club meeting and, with the Li in tow, was inducted as a member. Now he wasn't only an apprentice at work but also in the best scooter club around. It didn't take long to get roped into the club's ways, and before long, Chris was told he would be going to a race meeting. This wasn't so glamorous as it sounded. The club gathered at Andy's house on a Friday evening where Chris's first job was loading eight Lambrettas into the back of a hire vehicle. It was a three-ton box van that would also double as his home for the weekend. It was at this point that he realised the realities of being the club apprentice.

Once at the track (Mallory Park), the machines needed unloading to make room for somewhere to sleep, so once again, the apprentice got to work. This didn't matter as he knew that tomorrow was race day, and the excitement was building inside him. Finally, as dawn broke and the weary-eyed Lyons gathered themselves, that circuit began to burst into life. Chris couldn't believe what he was seeing, hundreds of race-prepared scooters all getting ready to go out on track, with the smell of two-stroke fumes only enhancing his desire to be involved. Right from the start, he was in the thick of it, bump-starting machines, holding spanners and being wherever he was needed, but that was as close to racing as he'd get for a while.

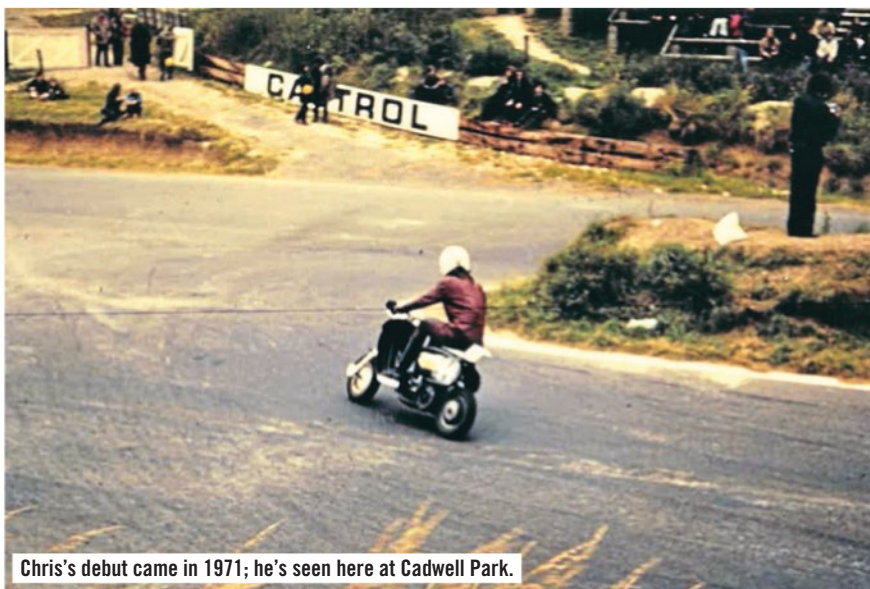


A TWISTY SPRINT
at **CURBOROUGH**
OFF THE A38 » LITCHFIELD » BURTON on TRENT RD.
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15th 1972
FIRST MAN STARTS 11:00AM

The Fifteenth Isle of Man
SCOOTER HOLIDAY WEEK
JUNE 17th — 24th 1972



For race 'apprentice' Chris the closest he would get to the race action was watching from the sides.



Chris's debut came in 1971; he's seen here at Cadwell Park.

“ Like his Lambretta, Chris felt battered and bruised, questioning whether it was worth it all. The answer came the next day with the award of a silver medal for completing the trial ”



Navigating one of the corners at the Curborough sprint course and starting to look like one of the pros.

No one had mentioned racing to him, and it soon became evident he wasn't going to be. As he later recalled: "Apart from being the helper, I spent the rest of the time generally getting in the way." It didn't matter though; just the experience of being involved was worth the effort expended in earning his spurs as the new boy. Yes, he was young compared to the rest of them, but they liked his keenness, and that weekend, he had earned their respect. In turn the weekend had implanted the racing bug into Chris and he was determined to become part of what happened on the track. The club boasted a group of riders that read like a who's who of the sport and included Iggy Mycock, Eamond Keher, George Knagg, Bob Melling, John Forster, John Osbourne, John Rowlands, Ian Lacey, Jim Davey and Ron Moss, who at that time raced for the Lyons. In 1971 Chris's name was added to the roll, this being the same year that the national championship took off.

My turn

No more was this a case of simply being allowed to "play with the big lads", as he called the others. He was now one of them. Just as when he'd been told to join the club, the orders rang out once again, but this time it was to go racing. It was a strange feeling because for so long he'd wanted to be part of it, and now he was. The grand debut would be at Mallory Park using a Vega borrowed from John Rowlands. Being unable to afford a set of leathers, his attire would be a set of Belstaffs with an Everoak piss pot helmet. This was clubman racing on the bottom rung of the ladder, but Chris didn't care, he was finally about to become a true Manchester Lyon.

The goal was simple: to complete the two races he'd entered without falling off, finishing being the only priority. It didn't matter about the position, even if he was last; having the accolade of being a scooter racer was all that mattered that day. Somehow, Chris navigated his way around the circuit, at times thinking: "What the bloody hell am I doing here?" but he finished the two races with both himself and the Vega in one piece. It was the perfect introduction, and the only thing on his mind now was to build his own race machine. The timing couldn't have been better; when Innocenti ceased Lambretta production, the bottom fell out of the market and a second-hand Lambretta could be picked up for next to nothing.

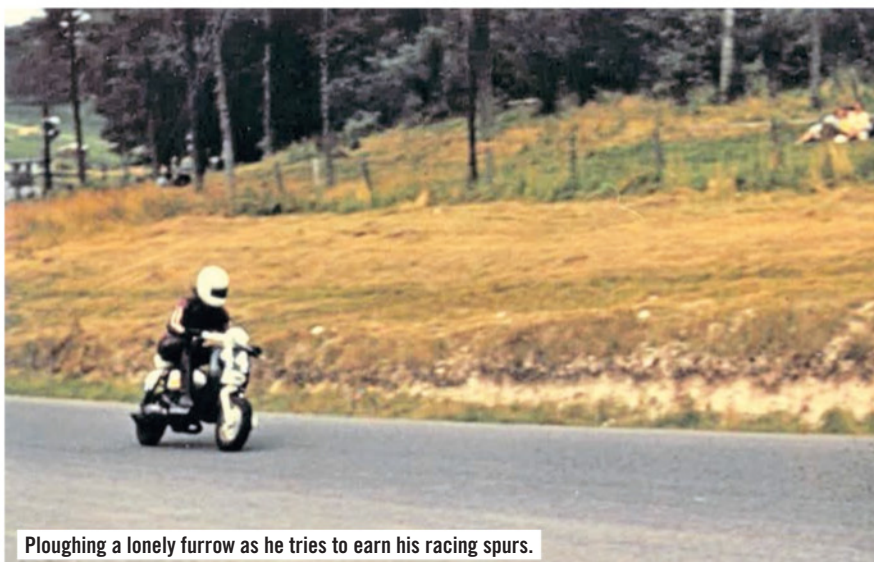
Having scraped enough money together to buy a TV175 frame and 150 engine, Chris began his build. He tuned the barrel himself using tooling courtesy of Hawker Siddeley and plenty of advice from club members. With a 30mm square block Dell'Orto carburettor and what can only be described as the noisiest expansion chamber ever, the Chris Forster Special began to take shape. Once it was up and running, the events came thick and fast, with a combination of circuit races and sprint meetings to start with. His Lambretta certainly stood out with

its 'Superheap' logo on the side panels, a tongue-in-cheek nod to the other club members, most of whom owned Supertune machines.

Holiday time

It was a steady but slow approach as Chris immersed himself into the racing world. He was in it for the long haul, there was no question of that. However, while wanting to be successful in the sport, it was better to learn the basics first and respect those he was competing against, most of whom were seasoned riders, certainly compared to him. His first attempt at the Isle of Man, the most prestigious event on the calendar, was in 1972. Labelled as the 'scooter holiday week' it was anything but that, certainly for a first timer. The rest of the club members had competed there several times and were happy to scare Chris, telling him stories of what it was like to compete in what they described as the world's most gruelling endurance race.

"I was thrown in at the deep end as the first competition was a full-day trial," said Chris. This was a mix of both on and off-road riding, covering every cart track on the island, or so it seemed. Along the way it was necessary to sign in at specific locations, a rider's overall position being determined by how long each stage took to compete. By the end of that first day it was hard to distinguish who had suffered the most, Chris or the Lambretta. As he counted the toll on his engine Chris found that a piece of the piston had disappeared and a ring was missing. It seemed hard to believe the



Ploughing a lonely furrow as he tries to earn his racing spurs.

scooter was still running, especially when the carb kept falling off and the exhaust was as flat as a frying pan, having been grounded numerous times.

Like his Lambretta, Chris felt battered and bruised, questioning whether it was worth it all. The answer came the next day with the award of a silver medal for completing the trial. On one hand, this shocked him but, on the other, made him feel proud. The rest of the club members were also shocked and somewhat bemused as none of them thought he stood a chance of finishing. All the ridiculing on the way there was light-hearted, but now the apprentice was ready for promotion. In retrospect that was

probably the day that Chris won the respect of his race companions, there was no question that he was now a true Lyon.

Scooter racing was a young person's pastime and some of the older names involved in both the tuning and sporting scene were starting to drift away. Fortunately, Chris was part of the new breed and had his best racing years ahead of him. Having tasted success at the Isle of Man, he was hungry for more of the same.

Next month we'll see in which direction his racing career would take him.

Words: Stuart Owen

Images: The Chris Forster archive



The road section of the course was easy to handle.

V200 RS

It may seem like a contradiction in terms, but sometimes a scooter stands out by being subtle. That's certainly the case with Marius Haller's smallframe.

From an early age, Marius had an interest in engines and, by 16, had a good understanding of how they worked. This suited him perfectly when he ventured into the world of scooters, acquiring a Vespa P200 that didn't stay standard for long.

It wasn't that the P2 needed modifying; it was more that Marius wanted to satisfy his curiosity, and that's how he's approached every scooter that he's owned since. With every project came more knowledge and each development became more radical.

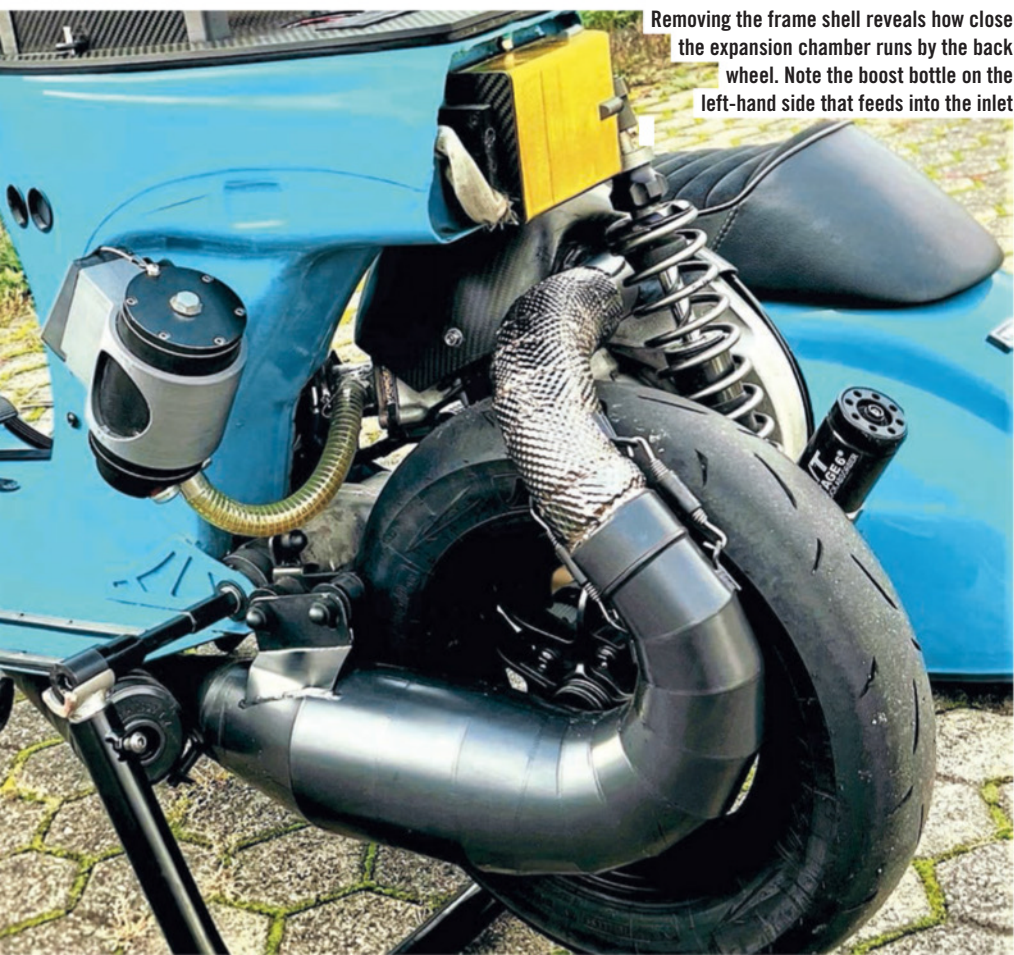
It's fair to say that Marius has a love of all vehicles, two- or four-wheeled, and his big passion is for the Porsche RS series of cars (hence the name of this scooter).

The plan for his next project was to take inspiration from the legendary German car manufacturer, but with one obvious difference – Porsche has vast resources at its disposal while Marius works from his shed. However, when you look at what he's created, you might for a moment think this scooter was built at the factory, because it has been so well executed.

Bit by bit

At the beginning of 2020, Marius purchased a Vespa V50 frame and various parts which he turned into a viable scooter that was used as a daily rider. Once winter came and the scooter was laid up to rest, Marius succumbed to temptation and the small frame was selected to become his next project. Although some specialist welding would require the skills of others, everything else – from design to fabrication and final assembly – would be carried out by Marius himself.

The first component to go under the knife was the chassis, as it's here where the transformation can really be seen. The small compact design of a Vespa small frame lends itself to great handling but gaining access to the engine isn't easy due to the lack of space. Having thought things through, Marius asked himself, what if the back end was detachable, so it could be removed and expose the engine area? That's how it's done on the Porsche RS race cars. However, doing the same to the Vespa frame required a considerable amount of planning to get right.



Removing the frame shell reveals how close the expansion chamber runs by the back wheel. Note the boost bottle on the left-hand side that feeds into the inlet



Not so normal...



Attention to detail



Hydraulic clutch, brake
and steering damper give
perfect operation

“
Look up ‘Street
Sleeper’ in a
dictionary and
this little Vespa
should burst off
the page

”





Clever modifications to the front mudguard allow room for the shock absorber, while the front disc brake gets extra cooling thanks to the big air intake unit

If Porsche made Vespas, they would probably look something like this



Firstly, sections needed to be removed from the frame. This required precise cutting, making sure not to go too deep into the monocoque so it would lose its strength. This is critical around the area where the rear shock absorber mounts into the frame, and places the structure under the most stress.

Once all the excess metal was removed and the frame cleaned up, he could create his top shell. This would be made from carbon fibre and sculpted to look almost identical to the removed sections.

After exhaustive measuring and checking, the one-piece section was completed, cut and matched to perfection. The next step was for the application of paint and then the seat and light unit were fitted. Other than the trim around the edge where it sits on the frame, it's almost impossible to tell that it's a removable section. Although the lift-off section may have posed the biggest challenge, many other carbon fibre parts were produced; over 40 in total, along with many 3D printed components. There are far too many to list here, but the pictures do the talking and show the innovative approach taken by Marius.

Power boost

With so much effort going into the frame, the engine had a lot to live up to and the selection of a Quattrini M200 was inspired. Add in a sprinkling of the top component names, such as FalkR, Crimaz and Smartcarb, and you know it will be something good. All this was complemented by some expert porting by his friend Enzo, and the result is an engine producing almost 40bhp.

Added extras include a hydraulic clutch with precise control and a fuel compensator, commonly known as a boost bottle (remember them in the 1980s?). The engine package gives a winning formula, and when mounted in such a lightweight chassis, it's a fair bet that acceleration is impressive.





Looks are deceiving

SCOOTER SPECIFICATIONS

Name of scooter (reason & inspiration): V200RS, a tribute to the RS models of Porsche, especially the GT2RS.

Has the scooter won any show trophies (If it hasn't been shown yet, when is its debut):

Scooterist Weekender Customshow 2022, Cologne:
1st Spectators' choice
1st Best Vespa Smallframe
3rd Best Vespa Racer.

Scooter model: Vespa V50.

ENGINE SPEC

Kit: Quattrini M200.

Crank: Quattrini, 56.5mm stroke.

Carb: Smartcarb SC2 38.

Exhaust: FalkR M200 Touring Down & Forward.

Clutch: Crimaz CM5, Multispring insert with six springs, Bordi Corse hydraulic clutch cover.

Gearbox: Crimaz Grand Tour, 10/14/18/21 – 47/50/53/55, primary drive 28/67.

Porting work by: My dear friend Enzo.

If street racer/highly tuned, who did the Dyno work?: Before increasing the compression from 11.0 to 11.5:1, the engine made 38.2hp at the crank. Port timing is 186/126.

What's it like to ride?: It's pretty fast, it's very stable. I enjoy it a lot!

FRAME SPEC:

Seat by: Streamline Seats.

Any frame modifications? What and by whom: The rear has been cut off, but the original shock absorber mount and frame body have been preserved. The engine mount has been reinforced with welded-on sheet metal made by PLC Corse.

Are there any specialised parts?:

In total, more than 40 three-D printed parts are now installed, plus more than 35 parts made of carbon fibre. In addition, there are a few milled parts, such as the front wheel hub or the central screw with which the spare wheel is fastened. I designed all these parts myself, but because I didn't have the machines, I had them made by various people

Are there any other unique details we have missed?: Maybe the needle-bearing gearshift lever...

What was the hardest part of the project?: As I didn't like any of the mounts for the steering damper available on the market, I designed one myself. But it took about 10 prototypes

before I was happy. Fitting the front wheel together with fork, brake caliper and disc without a single millimeter of track offset was not without its problems. It only worked in conjunction with the wheel hub I had designed myself.

Do you have any advice or tech tips for anyone starting a project?: There is a solution for everything and many specialists in the community.

Is there anyone you wish to thank?: The list of friends, supporters, suppliers and shops that have helped me get the scooter up and running is almost endless. I have to thank one person in particular, without whom it would have been simply impossible; My friend Enzo, who not only gave me the space in his garage, but also had many suggestions and calmed me down when something didn't work out the way I wanted it to.

Any additional information: I ride the scooter in everyday life. Only in good weather, but then also to work or to the city centre. So far it has been on two tours; Elba and in South Tyrol. Despite many details that some people might consider as gimmicks, the performance, reliability and riding are the focus for me.



OWNER DETAILS

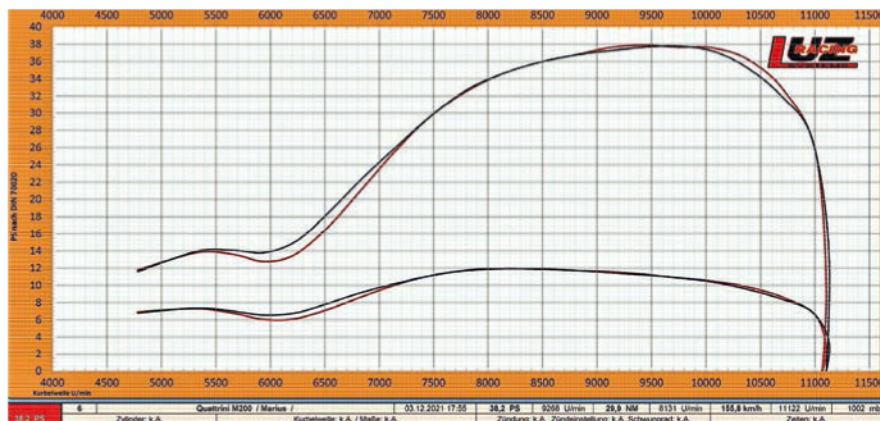
Name: Marius Haller

What was your first scooter and how did you first become interested in them?:

My first motorised two-wheeler was an Aprilia SR50 DiTech when I turned 16. I had gained some experience with combustion engines, mechanics and electronics from 14 onwards with radio controlled cars, so started modifying the scooter. When I turned 18, driving a car was more interesting and I sold the scooter. When I was 19, my interest in manual scooters awakened and I bought my first Vespa, an original PX 200 Lusso, built in 1985. This one did not remain original for long...

Any interesting or funny scooter stories?:

I wanted to ride home from a friend's house at night, but my PX wouldn't start. So I decided to bump start it. The scooter started, but the engine revved up immediately. The carburetor slide was stuck, that's why the engine hadn't started. The ignition switch didn't work and I tried to stall the engine, but the scooter threw me off and then spun on the tarmac like a break dancer until the engine finally died. A neighbour came running out of the house and asked if everything was okay, it was about 12.30am. Fortunately, apart from a few scratches in the paintwork, there was no damage.



The dyno graph shows peak power at 38.2 bhp, while the usable power spread is from 8000 to 10,500 rpm.

Blue is the colour

With a performance scooter of this type, it's reasonable to expect a flamboyant and vivid paint scheme. This isn't the case here, instead there's a single shade of blue that's offset by pure black proved by the seat, carbon fibre and running gear of the wheels and hubs etc. If you could look up 'Street Sleeper' in a dictionary, this little Vespa would burst off the page.

With the advancement in engine performance on small-frame engine blocks, there has been a massive influx of custom street racers of this type. Many feature the latest technology, but this one is different. Though it uses many of the components readily available, there's one thing that makes it stand out from the crowd. What you see before you is a compact and clever example of engineering at its best, and although others have been drafted in to provide specialist knowledge, it's the owner that's made the difference. Marius Haller hasn't just worked out and developed the design of this Vespa himself; he's executed them to perfection. Many great custom scooters have been built recently, but this one is among the best I've seen in a long time. Less is indeed more...

Words: Stuart Owen

Images: Marius Haller



The use of carbon fibre is clever and understated



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WIN!
For a chance to win this
Utility Seat & Toolbox!



The company PX!

SOCKET TO THEM...

If there's one thing that scooterists love almost as much as scooters it's tools to fix them with, which is why Stan accepted an invitation to visit the headquarters of Sealey in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

I'll be honest and say that I'd mixed feelings about the invite to Sealey. I love new tools and there's nothing better than an afternoon spent tinkering with them in the garage but I've had these corporate invitations before. They usually involve a hard sell of corporate values followed by days of writing aimed at trying to make a warehouse full of boxes sound interesting. I don't know what I expected to find when I arrived but it certainly wasn't being greeted by head of marketing, Matthew Grant, riding his Vespa PX. This might be more entertaining than I'd thought...

Call me Jack

Founded in 1978 by John Sealey, more often known as 'Jack' because he made

his name selling trolley jacks, the Bury St Edmunds-based company has grown to be one of the UK's – indeed one of Europe's – largest suppliers of tools. Still proudly owned and led by the Sealey family, it's probably one of the biggest companies you've never heard of, possibly because its range is sold through trade distribution, but an increasing number of its products are now being sold on retail platforms such as Amazon and eBay. Following the usual scooter talk – Matthew's been riding since he was 17 – we head over to his office for a coffee and introductory chat. The walk from reception takes 15 minutes, and we never stepped outside the building. When I say that the Sealey site is big I mean 28 acres big. Most of that space is occupied by buildings of two, or even three, floors. As we sat down

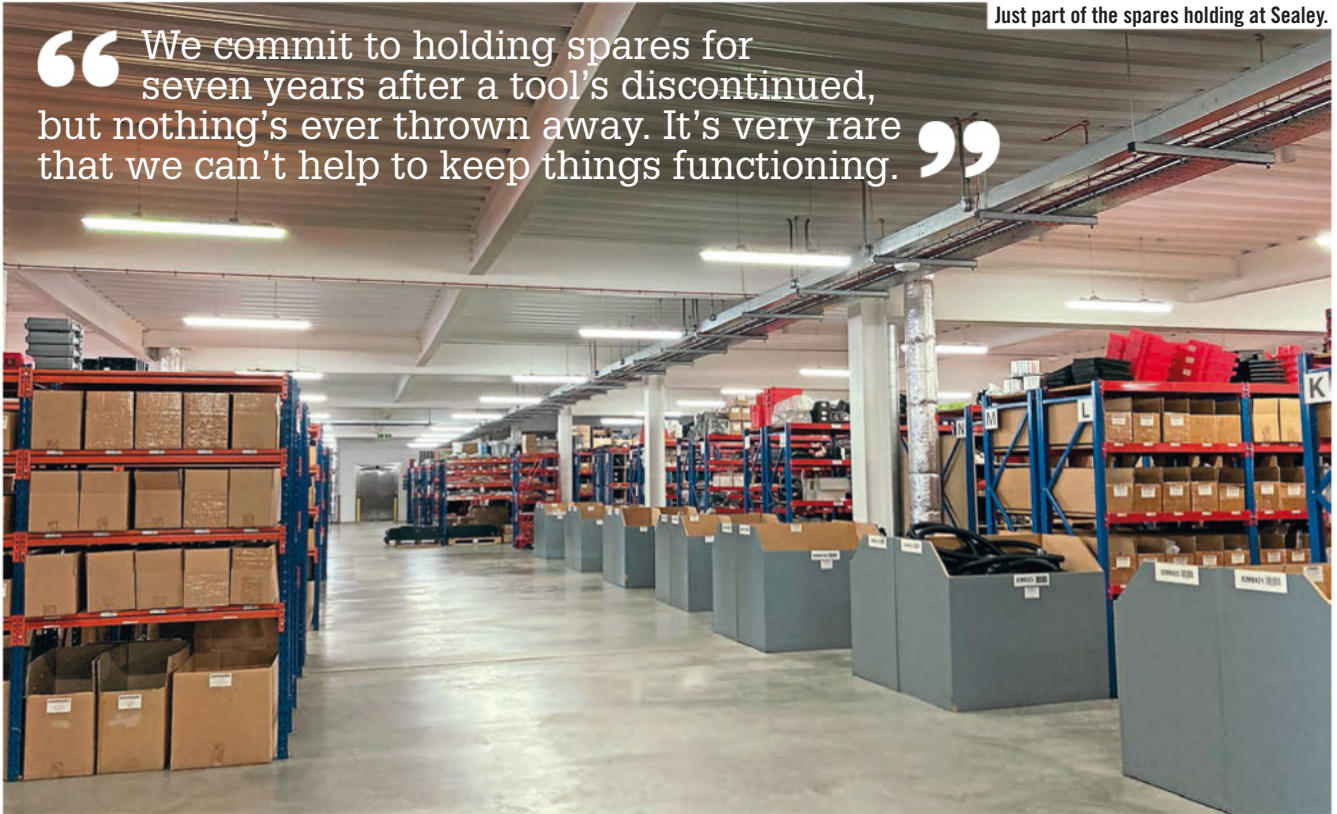
in Matthew's office I'd begun to realise that there's more to Sealey than anticipated.

In addition to the company's Worksafe range of safety and construction tools, Sealey's catalogue offers three ranges of tools; Siegen, which is its entry level brand; Premier, which aims itself squarely at the top end of the market and Sealey, its general range which sits in the mid-range of prices. It's the latter that we're most likely to encounter at retailers and I kicked off by asking Matthew what I thought would be the killer question: in a world where cheap tools are easy to come by, why should anyone pick Sealey products? "We live in a disposable world, and that's not right," he began. "Yes, you can pick up cheap tools, but they'll do the job for a while and then they'll break. I'd bet that most people don't even bother



Just part of the spares holding at Sealey.

“ We commit to holding spares for seven years after a tool's discontinued, but nothing's ever thrown away. It's very rare that we can't help to keep things functioning. ”



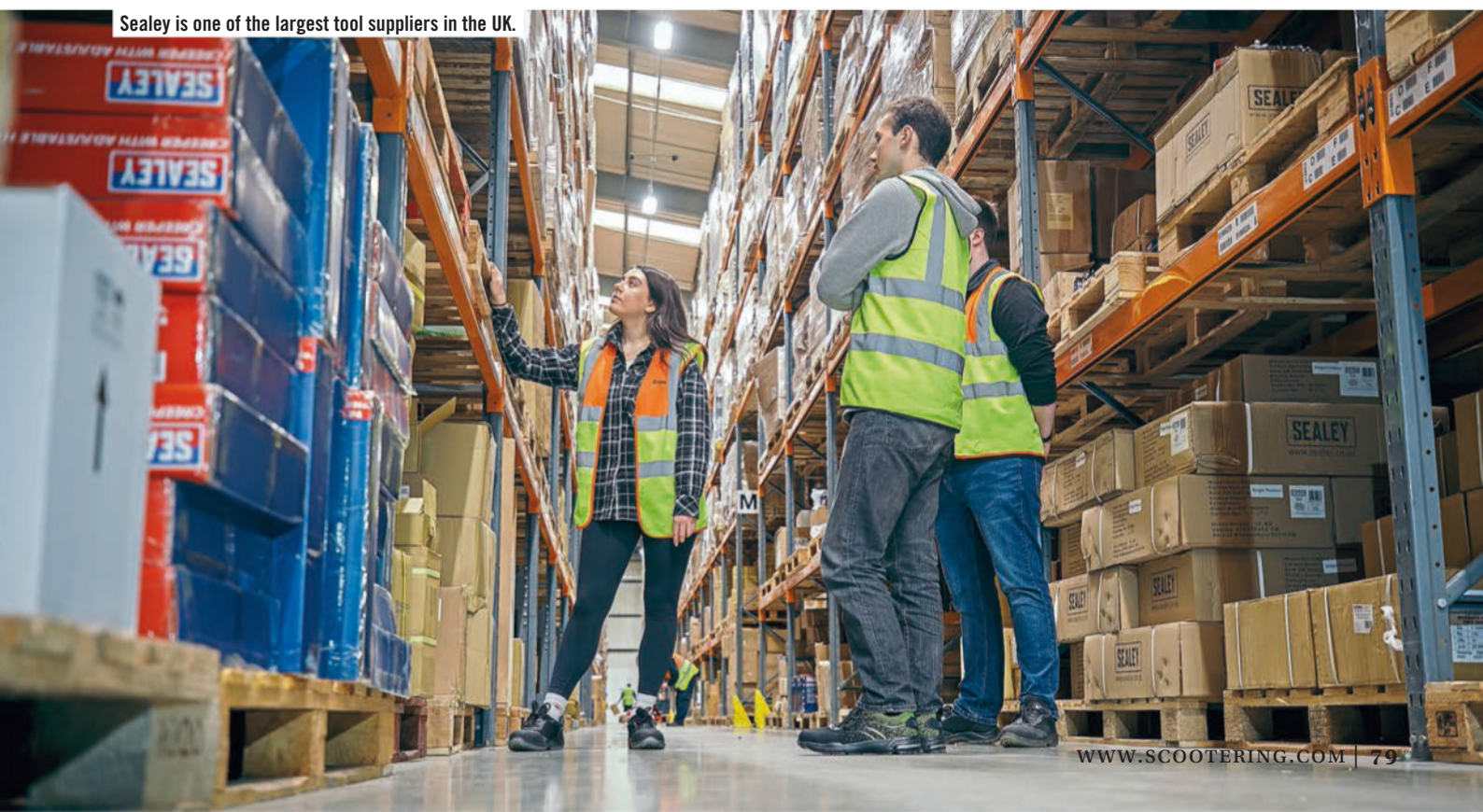
looking to see if there's a guarantee, and even if there is one the hurdles involved in making a claim mean it's easier to throw it away and buy another. That's normal for most people but scooterists are different, we know that things can be repaired, we want things to last. That's what we do at Sealey, we may be average in price, but our customer service and aftersales support is second to none.”

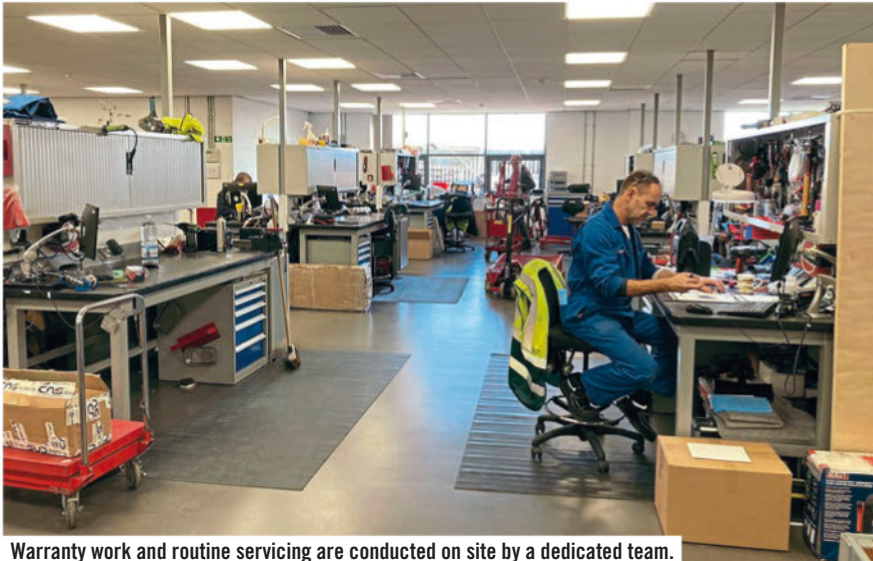
Team Sealey

Something in my face must have shown that was the type of corporate answer I was expecting, though I'll admit the scooterist reference threw me a little. Handing me the statutory health and safety hi-vis vest, Matthew said: “Come on, I'll show you.” As we walked through a warehouse the size of an aircraft hangar he continued: “We have

around 12,000 products in the current catalogue; of those, 9000 are manufactured to our own specifications, and before you ask, yes, that does mean factories in the Far East. That's true for pretty much every tool manufacturer but where we differ is in our quality control.” At this we stop outside a large window that looks on to a laboratory. Inside two men are hard at work.

Sealey is one of the largest tool suppliers in the UK.





Warranty work and routine servicing are conducted on site by a dedicated team.

"This is where all the shipments we receive are checked against specifications. Most suppliers don't bother with this, they accept that there'll be failures and when something goes wrong, they'll send out a replacement. That's if the consumer bothers to complain. These guys typically reject two shipping containers full of stock every week. That's a cost to us but it means that when we send out a product the customer can have faith that it'll work."

Impressive as that may be, experience says that things will go wrong, and I ask how Sealey responds to those sorts of complaints. With a smile Matthew continues the tour, this time I'm taken back to the reception building and what looks like a small call centre. "Ring our help line and it'll

be answered here, in Bury St Edmunds by members of our own team. They deal with everything from trade orders to technical queries and take between 1600 and 2000 phone calls a day.

"It's a point of pride that we answer every call that comes through within three seconds. Our customers are busy people, and we need to respect their time.

"We'll either arrange for a repair kit to be sent out or for the item to be returned here. Most of our customers are in the trade and need things back up and running quickly, that's why we handle repairs ourselves. That same level of service operates across all of our brands and applies whether it's a warranty claim or an older item that's in need of spares or repair."



Show me the 10mm sockets

When I ask if he's serious about holding spare parts for tools Matthew ushers me to his car and we drive across the site to another hangar-sized building. Having called in to see the technicians in the on-site workshop where tools are tested and instructional videos are produced, we arrive at the spares holding. Here, in rack after rack, everything from trolley wheels to electrical components and of course a box full of 10mm sockets can be found waiting for their date with destiny. "We commit to holding spares for seven years after a tool's discontinued, but nothing's ever thrown away. It's very rare that we can't help to keep things functioning."

He waves me over to the stairs



Possibly the largest firm you've never heard about.



THINK OF THE CHILDREN...

It's obvious that Sealey is a company that isn't afraid to put its money where its mouth is in terms of customer service and support, but as Ben Sealey explained, the company also has an eye on the future which involves a long-term commitment. "We work very closely with local schools and colleges in their

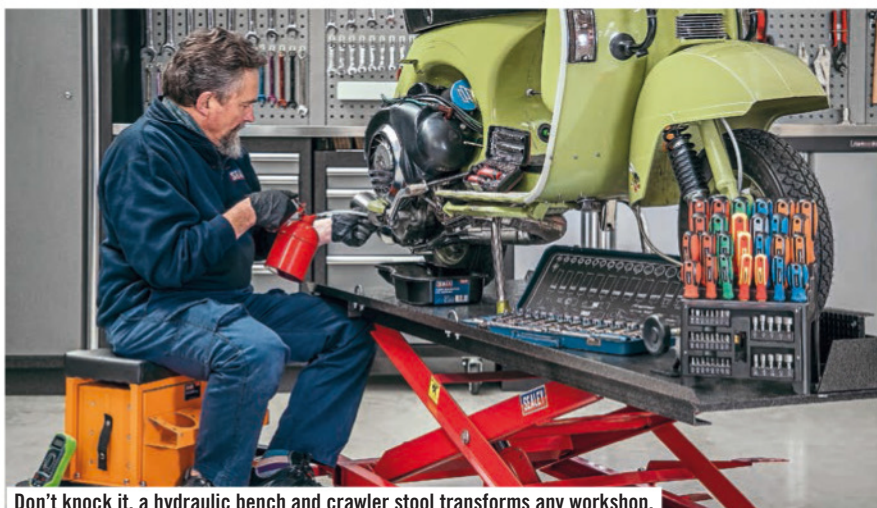
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) curriculum. Every year we take on a group of 'Tool University' applicants and over the course of 18 months introduce them to all aspects of the business. When that time draws to a close, they will have a valuable understanding of how each department/

function in the business knits together and will be well placed to focus on the career path that's right for them, be that marketing, design or engineering. It's a programme that I'm very keen on, as a company we believe in investing for the future and you don't have to be called Sealey to be part of our family."

which emerge in another workshop, where technicians are busy at lines of workstations. "This is where the repairs are carried out and look here..." Gesturing to a workstation, Matthew points to an electric welder. "That's 30 years old and it's not unusual to find something that age in here. Admittedly it's a bit like Trigger's broom now but the owner sends it in for servicing every few years, we fix it and send it back to work. Surely that's a better way to treat things?"

Candy store

If that wasn't enough, Matthew saves the best until last. In yet another building is the corporate showroom. Every item in the catalogue, laid out for trade contacts to study. I've been in smaller DIY superstores and could easily lose myself in the sheer joy of being among so many goodies. Although Sealey doesn't produce specialist tools such as Lambretta fork compressors or Vespa clutch holding tools, it's hard to think of many workshop tools that aren't somewhere in its catalogue. Other than the massive industrial spanners, for which I've no use but would still love to own, my eye was most drawn to a range of multicoloured spanners. With these there's no need to delve through



Don't knock it, a hydraulic bench and crawler stool transforms any workshop.

the toolbox checking for a specific size, once used to the coding the user will know to pick up 'dark blue'. The same range includes sockets that are coded in the same way. A very simple example of how Sealey strives to improve its catalogue year after year. Just as the tour concluded, Matthew and I were joined by 'the boss', Ben Sealey, son of the founder and clearly passionate about the

family business. "All I ask is that you get the message out that we're here, we stock quality, place a huge emphasis on service and if you buy Sealey you only need to buy once."

What's not to love about that?

Words: Stan

Images: Stan and Sealey

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THIS MONTH IN THE GARAGE...

This month Dan lays down the law on ignition timing for your scooter and discovers that there are still bargains out there. Oh, and in other news, Mytho-Poeikon is back, soon(ish)...

They say things happen in threes and that is certainly true of the same conversation that I had three times this month with three separate customers, each running a variable ignition system on their respective Lambretta and Vespa scooters. My questions are always the same: is your ignition static or variable? If it's static, what is it set to and if it is variable, what is it ticking over at and what does it come back to at peak rpm? I never fail to be astonished by the number of people who have no idea what it's set to or no idea what it moves back to at peak rpm.

What's even more striking is the number of scooterists with variable ignitions who firmly state: "It's set at 23 and then comes back to 17 at peak revs." This statement is soon shattered when I ask two further questions: "Do you know what the peak rpm of your machine is?" and: "Have you strobed it to check?" I then invariably stare into an abyss of blank faces.

Okay, so what's the deal and why am I so pedantic about ignition timing? Basically, like high blood pressure, it's a hidden killer. The amount of heat that can be generated with incorrect ignition timing is quite astonishing, and with all else being set

correctly on a scooter, the wrong ignition timing can still hole a piston in the blink of an eye. So how do we tackle this?

Firstly, I'm not a fan of variable ignitions on scooters with clubman pipes; in my opinion there's just no need for them. Variable ignitions are very helpful to smooth out the poor low-down power on high-revving engines that are running expansion chambers, but are generally just not required on low-revving engines that run clubman pipes which have loads of low-down power and plenty in the mid-range.



Just a few of the scooters from Dan's social media post from when he asked the question, which is your favourite?



All a variable or sport ignition does here is jack up the ignition timing at low rpm and create unwanted heat. So my opinion is this: if you must use a variable ignition, use it on an engine that has poor power in the lower rev range and make sure the timing and fuelling are right. This will help smooth out the lagging bottom end and the transition from 'off-pipe' to 'on-pipe' as it hits the power band. Then, the next question must therefore be: how do we set it up?

This is where a dyno can pay dividends, or info from the pipe manufacturer, because you need to know where your engine hits peak power. For example, a scooter that uses a touring expansion and hits peak power at around 6500rpm will need a different ignition setting from a scooter that has a race pipe and peaks at around 9000rpm.

Take a SIP Vape sport ignition for example and let's say it's running on a scooter that has a low-revving tour pipe that peaks at 6500rpm; the engine is clearly never going to get up to 8000/9000rpm, so it will never get the timing back to 17 deg BTDC, which is where you would want it. In fact on high-revving engines, especially big powerful ones, I often bring it back to 15 or 16 deg BTDC in some cases, to help it rev out more easily and to keep it cool. So, if you have your ignition

set to 23 deg BTDC at tickover with your low-revving tour pipe, then at the 6500rpm peak when you are cruising along at 65mph you are still up at 19 deg BTDC, which, in my opinion, is too high.

Furthermore, when you are chugging around town at 40mph (4000rpm) the timing is up at 23.7 deg BTDC, and even at 5000rpm it is still at 22 deg BTDC, which is probably going to produce a lot of heat. Therefore, in this particular example with the tour pipe, you would be better setting the ignition to 21 deg BTDC at tickover, so that by the peak point of 6500rpm it will be back to 16.5 deg BTDC, which is far healthier and still means it is cooler around town at the lower rev range.

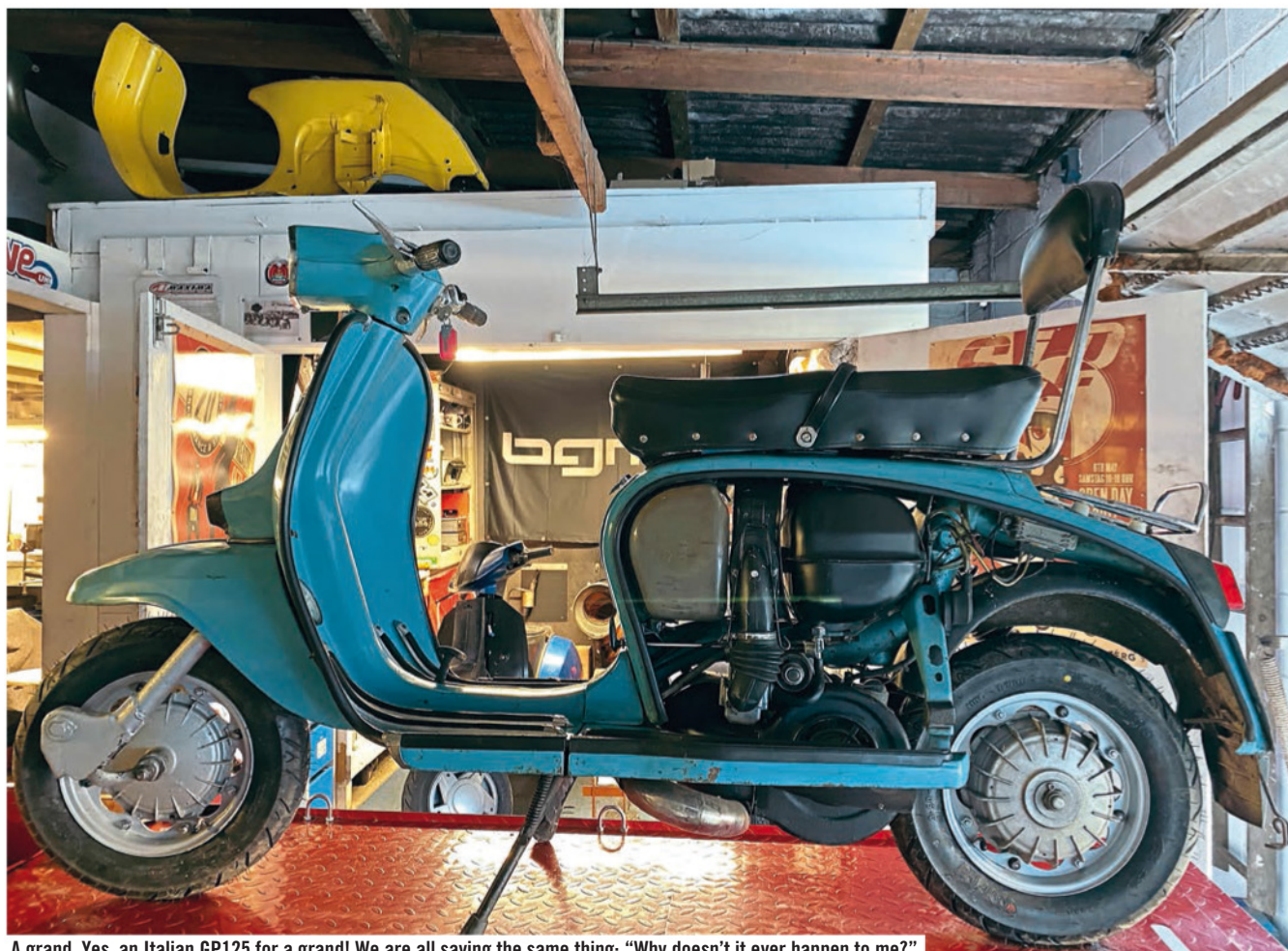
Conversely, the race pipes that hit 8000/9000rpm will easily get back to 17/16 deg from 23 by the time they hit their peak rpm power and range, so in those cases, 23 would be okay. And that is my point: you must know where your scooter makes its peak rpm and set your ignition relevant to your scooter's particular performance level. If you just rely on arbitrary numbers quoted by other scooterists, you may be setting yourself up for a very hot-running engine, and possible piston failures due to excessive heat.

The final cherry on the cake is the most important. Get the timing strobed after it

is set up, make sure you use a rev counter with the strobe gun, so that you can see where the timing is sitting at any given rpm point, then (and only then) you can be certain that the ignition is set correctly and thus giving the best balance of performance, efficiency, power and cooling.

Bargains: grand to see they're still out there...

On a lighter note, I was pleased to see not one but two scooterists arrive at the garage with what can only be described as epic bargains. The first chap rolled up with a Series 2 Li150, full-bodied, all solid, complete, and running. The scooter was just a bit tired and needed some basic maintenance to oil, plug, cables, brakes etc – all easily sortable. The second chap, completely separately, rolled up with a similar condition Italian GP125; again, full body, solid, straight, and complete, just a bit tired and also needing some basic maintenance. Both guys unravelled brilliant stories of 'always wanting a scooter like this', along with 'never being able to find one' and 'then I spoke to this bloke and he said...' etc. In each case, both guys paid, wait for it, a grand. Yes, an Italian GP125 for a grand, and an S2 Li150 for a grand. So, it just goes to show, they are still out there. Hard to find, but still there. Just.



A grand. Yes, an Italian GP125 for a grand! We are all saying the same thing: "Why doesn't it ever happen to me?"

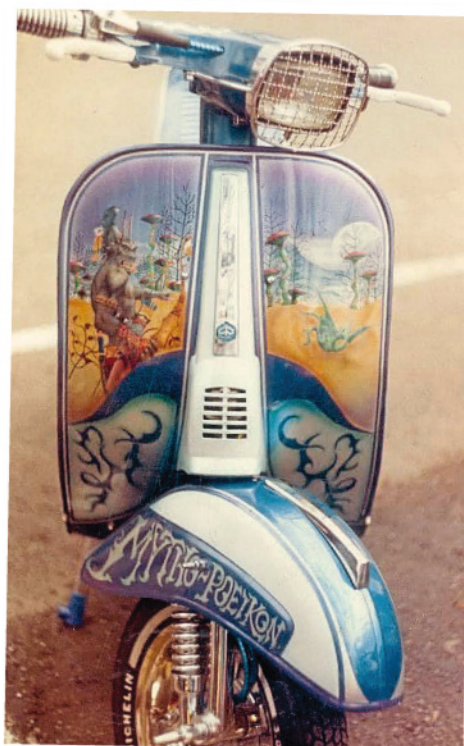


Mytho-Poeikon reprise...

I've been doing a fair bit on the old social media recently and in one post I shoved up a few pics of old Lambretta icons from back in the day, asking the subjective question: 'which is your favourite?' I then repeated the exercise for Vespa also and was delighted at the healthy response both posts induced. It's always nice to see a good string of positive comments on a thread, but one comment I wasn't expecting was when the owner of one of the machines piped up with a recent picture of it. The scooter I am of course talking about is the legendary Mytho-Poeikon, one of my all-time favourite scooters. A quick messenger fest then ensued and the story unravelled as to where Mytho has been all these years and the current state of play in its journey back to its former glory. I can't say much more at this point, but rest assured... Mytho is making a comeback, and from what I've seen, it's going to be stunning. Remember, you heard it here first – and we will have the exclusive. Stay tuned – see you next month.

Words: Dan

Images: Dan/Sean Brady



The icon is having a makeover before its return to the scene.



ASK DAN

Got a problem your mates down the pub can't agree on? Send it to us, and we'll ask Dan for his words of wisdom.

Scalded cat scooter

Q: Hi Dan,

I recently had a 153cc FALC engine built with the matching race pipe and it won't pull past 50mph in fourth gear, but if I drop it into third gear it launches like a scalded cat and revs right out. Do I have an ignition fault?

Kind regards

George, Hull

A: Hi George,

It's always difficult to diagnose specific problems without having a scooter in front of me, but based on the limited information I have, I'd say no, it's not an ignition problem. What I tend to see in ignition faults, mostly, is that they present themselves in every gear. Even if the lighter load of first and second gear don't provoke the fault, which is rare as commonly you can see the fault even in neutral when you rev the scooter, the load of third gear certainly provides sufficient load, even on the dyno, so it would definitely show on the road.

No, what I'm thinking is that you have a high-revving engine, which is small in cc and has a race pipe fitted. This can be a tricky proposition to ride on the road, as it may have very little power low down, and then a monster amount of power high up... fourth gear may just be too much of a load to push the scooter into the higher rpm region where the bigger power delivery is, and the scooter just needs that nudge in third to get it past that point.

If you read this month's column, you'll see that this is where variable ignitions can be very helpful to bring up the power in these lower rpm areas, and also smooth the transition between on-pipe/off-pipe. It can just make the difference when trying to roll on the throttle in fourth gear, where the engine has a knife-edge power band and screams like a wailing banshee! Let me know how you get on.

Kind regards

Dan



FROM SOW'S EAR TO SILK PURSE...

After last month's introduction to this new Vespa-tech series, it's now time to get stuck in and start stripping the scooter, to see what secrets this old girl is hiding. Dan's favourite starting place, as always, is the engine!

It's fair to say that we don't have a 'hard and fast' plan that's carved in stone for this project, more of a loose idea to simply strip, repair, replace, tune and titivate the PX, all within a reasonable budget (famous last words?). What we find as we go along will dictate whether parts are refurbished and which get replaced.

With the above in mind, the first thing I wanted to sort was the engine, that way I could dyno it before we start to

get a base reading, and then sort out the strip and rebuild, while spicing up any parts as we go.

Once complete, with it still being in the chassis, I could then set up the ignition timing and carburation on the dyno before dropping the finished engine out and getting stuck into the rest of the scooter. That way we know that, when everything is done, the engine becomes plug 'n' play for the final build... or at least, that's the idea.

Words and Images: Dan

TECH STEP-BY-STEP:

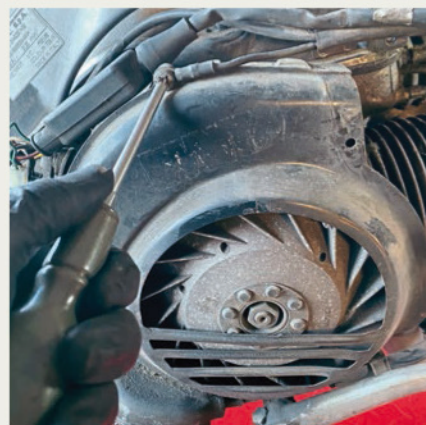


1: First thing to remove is the black plastic head cowl. It's a simple case of a couple of screws on the side and a bolt on the top. With these removed, the cowl just needs a wiggle and a tug to remove it.



2: Seeing as we are at this end, we may as well continue and remove the cylinder head for inspection. The four cylinder-stud nuts should not present any problems but if they are seized, a drop of penetrating oil left to soak can help. Usually, the whole stud will come out with the nut, which is absolutely fine.

With the cylinder head removed, we can see that it has been blowing a little, probably contributing to a little lost power.

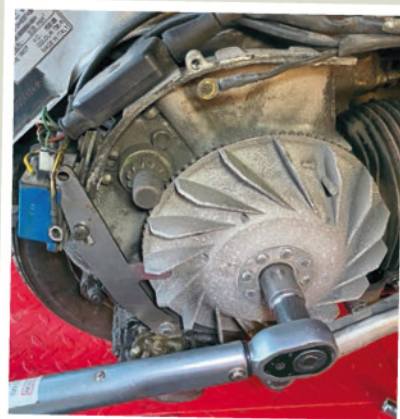


3: Continuing with the removal of the cowl, we now want the fan cover off. Simply remove the remainder of the Phillips screws in order to expose the flywheel.



5: That's a lot of road film and dirt, but hidden beneath it all are the three bolts which hold the clutch cover in place. Simply removed these and then pull in the clutch lever on the handlebars, the cover should then pop off.

4: To remove the flywheel, we will need to stop it from rotating. Note the special tool bolted to the cases to facilitate this. Many a Vespa owner will jam an object (such as a large chisel) between the fins of the fan to stop it from turning, be warned though; if you get it wrong the fins will snap! Before we loosen the flywheel, however, we can now nip around the other side and remove the clutch while the flywheel is locked in place. Prop a box or stand under the rear of the chassis and undo the nuts of the rear wheel. If you have trouble sliding the wheel out of its location, it can help to deflate it first.





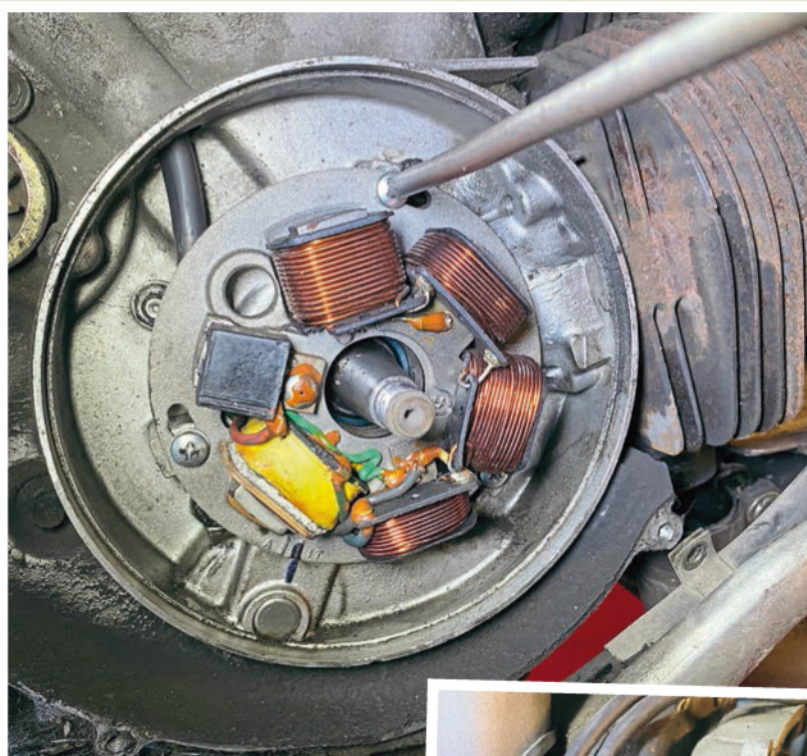
6: With the clutch cover removed, we can see the clutch centre plate that the brass plunger presses against. Simply slide a screwdriver underneath the wire spring and turn it gently until the centre cap pops off. With the centre cap removed, you can now see the clutch nut. In this case, it's a standard item, though some Vespa clutches use a castle nut for which a special tool is required.



7: With the centre nut removed, the clutches usually just pull off by hand. Be very careful not to lose the woodruff key at this stage, they have a habit of dropping into the casings! The little gear cog sitting on the crank arm that drives the oil pump can also be removed at this stage, for when the crank is ready to be removed.



8: Back on the flywheel side, we are now ready to loosen and remove the centre nut, before then disassembling the holding tool. Once the centre nut is removed, you will need the final special tool of this instalment, which is the flywheel puller tool. Simply thread the special tool into the flywheel, ensuring the threads go ALL the way in – don't be tempted to just screw it in part way as it can pull the threads if the flywheel is stuck firm. Once the puller is properly in place, tighten the centre bolt by hand and then use two spanners in opposing directions to turn the bolt until the flywheel pops off.



9: With the flywheel removed, we can now see the ignition stator plate. I've marked the stator's position with a Sharpie, which will help with setting the timing on reassembly. This unit is held in place by three Phillips screws – undo these before then removing the outer plastic housing to the wiring and unclipping each connector. The wiring will then slide through the engine case as you remove the whole stator.



10: To remove the gear selector we start by removing the two nuts holding it in place. We then turn the gear change on the handlebars to fourth gear, and give the selector a wiggle, it should pull out of place, exposing the shaft within.



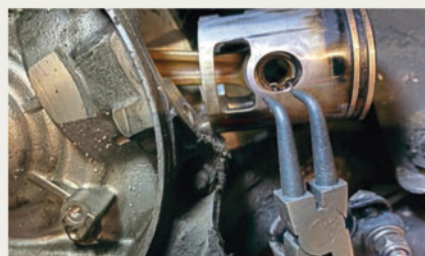
11: Next we can drain out the engine oil before splitting the cases. The oil drain bolt is hidden beneath a thick coat of dirt and road film, but once located it screws out quite readily. Have a receptacle of some kind already in place to let the oil drain into. The oil on this scooter looks to be in great condition!



12: One of the last jobs before splitting the cases is to remove the cylinder. First, we have to loosen the exhaust at its stub by unscrewing the bolt that is holding it in place. On the other side of the scooter, we just need to undo the single bolt that is holding the exhaust in place.

On this exhaust, although the bolt is free, the retaining nut is seized onto the captive bolt. Thus, when we turned the bolt with the spanner, it spun the nut in its housing, deforming it, and is now just spinning with every turn. It won't be coming off just yet, we will need to come back to this later!

As the exhaust main bolt is stuck in place, we can proceed by just lowering the exhaust off the stub, and continuing to split the cases anyway.



13: The last job is to double-nut the cylinder studs and slide them out of place. Once they are removed, the cylinder will just pull off the piston. You don't need to remove the piston at this point if you don't want to, but if you do, the gudgeon pin is just held in by a circlip on either side. These pins can sometimes stick in place and can be a bugger to remove. A special puller tool can be used if this happens, but in our case, the crank is coming out anyway, so we will do that job on the bench.

At this stage, the cases are ready for splitting and then we can remove the crank and inspect the other internal components.

See you next month for the next instalment – stay tuned.



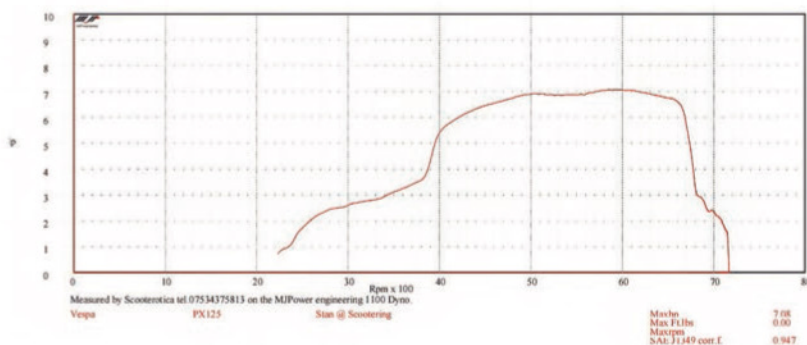
ON THE DYNO...

Even though we will be ripping this engine apart and fully revamping it, I always like to know what a scooter is kicking out in terms of power before we do any work.

Traditionally, Piaggio quoted between 6.5hp-9hp for the PX125, depending on what year it was produced; later 'Euro 3 compliant' models were the worst at 6.5hp, and earlier models were the better choice at 8-9hp.

My dyno showed this little rascal was only pumping out 7hp @ 6000rpm, despite this being one of the 9hp variants. However, the factory nearly always quotes power

at the crank. As a rule of thumb we can calculate an estimated rear-wheel number by deducting around 10% for transmission losses, so we should be looking at around 8.1hp. I noted during the strip down that this little engine was very tired, with worn rings, low compression, blow-by on the piston and a leaking head. The spark plug had seen better days also. I'm sure we would hit the 8+hp mark if those things were remedied, but thankfully we intend to do better than that anyway. Still, it's good to know what the starting figure is.



WHERE'S YA TOOL?

The tools required for this month's work are:

- a) Flywheel holder tool – VE Code: VT15014
- b) Flywheel puller tool – VE Code: VT15001
- c) Clutch castle nut tool (not required for this model) – VE Code: VT15002





LAMBRETTA TUNING THROUGH THE AGES

PART FOUR: ROLL OUT THE BARRELS

As the new millennium approached, the world was full of optimism for the future; the same could be said for Lambretta tuning



A revolution waiting to happen

Although the Lambretta tuning market seemed to drag itself into the 21st century with very little changing; there were several visionaries who could see unexploited potential and were keen to fill the void.

By now it was much easier to bring an exhaust onto the market because new technologies meant they were cheaper to produce and high-specification cranks had been on the market for some time. The

problem was with cylinder kits, where the outlay for tooling was so high that volume sales were required to make it worthwhile.

This problem had been highlighted by Ray Kemp when producing the TS1 kit, where the first batch of kits required an investment running into the tens of thousands. However, this risk was mitigated by the knowledge that there was nothing else like it available.

Even with this almost guaranteed market, it would take years for the TS1 kits to start

generating a profit. This economic reality had dissuaded other tuners from developing their own tuned barrels, but fortunately a new market had emerged. A solid demand for classic scooters in the UK, combined with a lack of interest in Europe and a strong pound, all contributed to thousands of scooters being imported to the UK.

Where Lambrettas were concerned most of these were small blocks and all of them were underpowered.

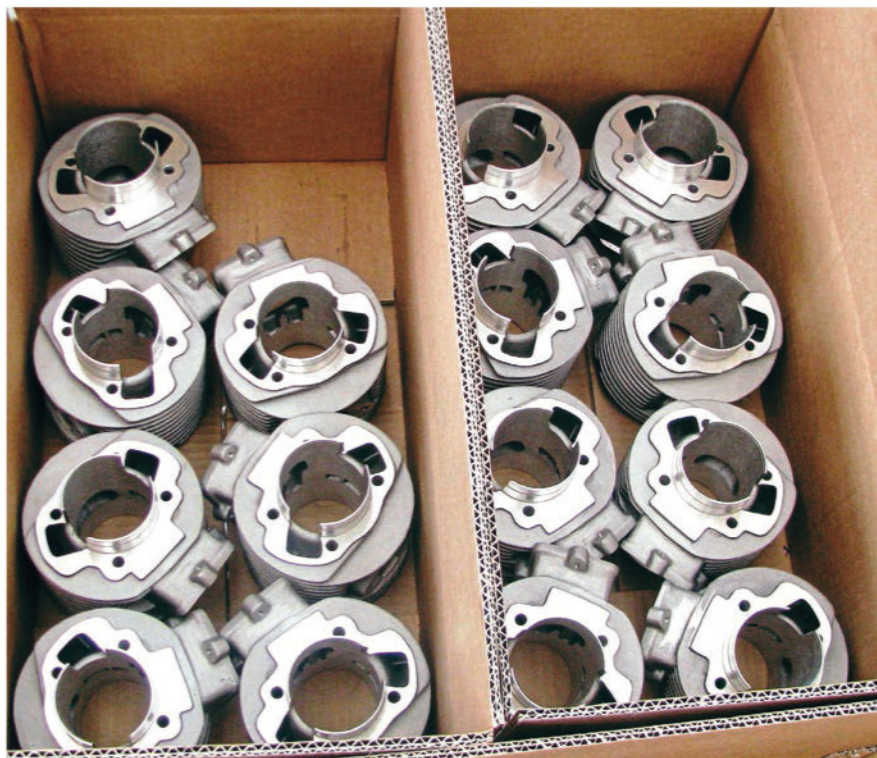


Scooter Restorations' SR 185 cylinder helped unlock the potential of the small block Lambretta casing

Admittedly, it was still possible to get one of the tuned conversions that had become popular in the 1980s, but people like Dave Webster had given up barrel porting, and the remaining tuners would never be able to keep up with demand. These older kits also relied on a big carburettor and expansion pipe to get the best out of them, and many owners didn't want that. The demand was for a kit that would work with a clubman exhaust and 25mm Dell'Orto running through a filter. The result wouldn't have earth-shattering performance but would result in a Lambretta that would be safe in modern traffic. A few within the tuning scene noticed this and felt that the market was large enough to make such a conversion cylinder financially viable.

The race is on

With extensive connections in India, Paul Brierly, who runs Scooter Restorations, had access to tooling that would allow him to produce a cast barrel for the small block casing. His solution would use a 64mm bore, have a capacity of 185cc and,



The Mugello and Imola kits from Italy were produced in large quantities

“ When an expansion pipe, bigger carburettor and a little expert porting were factored into the equation the small block kits could easily reach 20bhp, pushing them into TS1 levels of performance. ”

combined with pre-tuned ports, provide a good power boost compared to the standard 150cc cylinder. In the Midlands, Richard Taylor was also developing a barrel of similar capacity, but this would have a reed block induction and offer capacities of up to

200cc. However, both these developments took time to reach the market and in Paul's case, getting them through customs.

Both were beaten to the line when Tino Sacchi announced that he'd produced his own cylinder aimed at the small block market. Unlike the other two, which were cast iron barrels, this kit would be made from aluminium and lined with Nikasil, similar to the TS1. There were two versions, one piston ported (Mugello) and the other (Imola) that used reed block induction, and was dubbed 'The baby TS1'. Both Tino's kits had a complete top-end package with the barrel, piston, cylinder head and inlet manifold being supplied as one package making it easy for the customer to fit. An advertising campaign was followed by Tino visiting the UK for EuroLambretta 2000, where he displayed his demonstrator. People were sceptical at first, and its price tag of several hundred pounds was a significant hurdle for the kit to overcome.

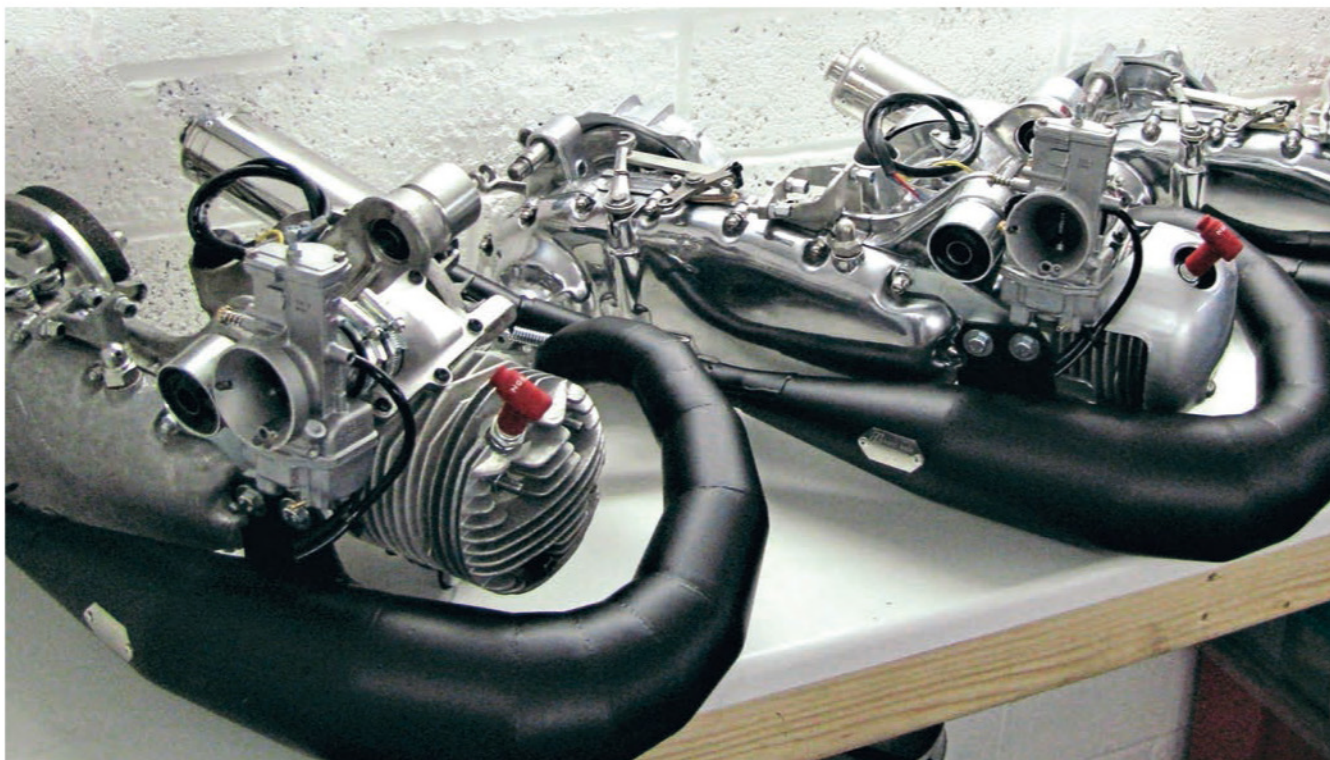
As the Imola and Mugello began to receive favourable reviews both in the press and from happy owners, kits started to fly off the shelf. It wasn't long before the Scooter Restorations and (Richard Taylor's) GT 185 kits hit the market. Almost overnight the customer had the most extensive choice



The Imola featured a reed-valve induction, something never previously seen on a small block kit



The introduction of the RB kit by AF Rayspeed sent the tuning market into new territory



Overnight orders for RB engines came flooding in, with dealers struggling to build them quickly enough

in small block cylinder kits ever available. Thanks to these entrepreneurs, off the shelf performance was a reality for Lambretta owners everywhere.

The small block kit had proved the potential market was huge, but what about big block? The problem here was availability, as there were comparatively few casings in existence.

Flooding in

This new generation of kits could happily kick out 12 to 14 bhp in standard form, which was more powerful than a standard

Lambretta 200. When an expansion pipe, bigger carburettor and a little expert porting were factored into the equation the small block kits could easily reach 20bhp, pushing them into TS1 levels of performance. These figures weren't lost on large block owners who began to ask when big block versions would be introduced. The answer was one of economics, what was the point of tying up a massive sum of money in a pile of kits that could take years to shift?

Although Scooters India Limited (SIL) still held the moulds for the large block casing,

they didn't seem interested in recasting them, or when they did, it was in sporadic amounts. Finally, they realised there was money to be made and resumed production.

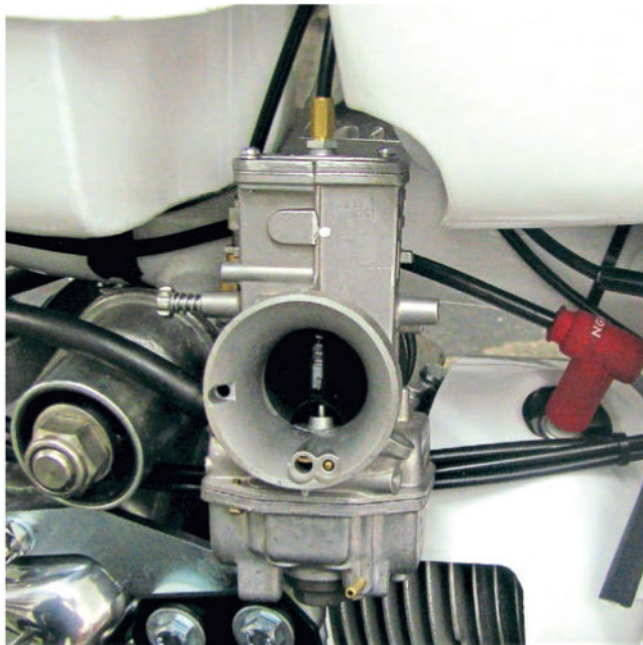
Soon the elusive big block casings were available in quantity, being offered by numerous Indian wholesale companies. Although Lambretta owners who wanted a genuine Italian 200cc casing would still have to look hard to find one and pay a premium, those who just wanted to build a big engine were happy with the Indian version. Having gone from being in short



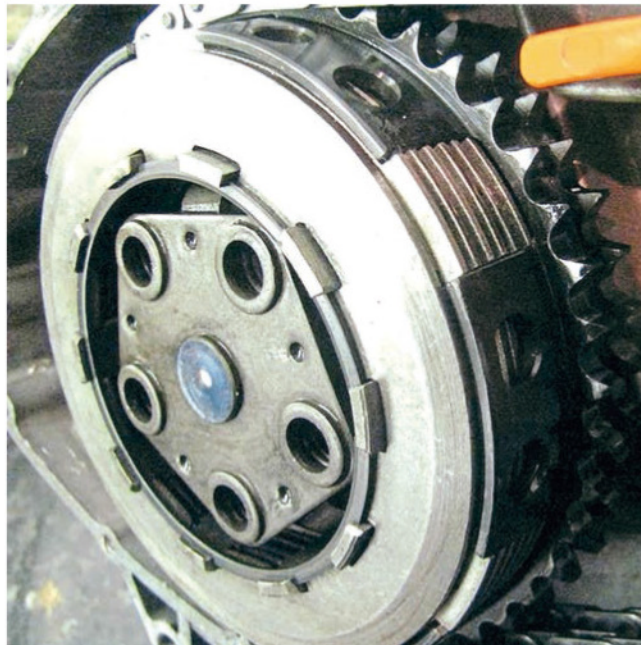
Ignition systems advanced at a pace, long gone were the days of the old points-type Lambretta



Expansion pipes resembled those of a motorcycle



Carburettors went through a revolution, with the Mikuni TMX 35 being a popular choice



A six-plate clutch could fit into a standard Lambretta crown wheel and this became another area of competition among manufacturers

supply, there were now more engine cases than people to buy them and prices fell. At one point it was possible to pick an Indian casing up for less than £100.

Owners began to demand better performing large block kits and manufacturers began to respond, confident that there was a market for their wares. When SIL decided to monetise the potential of its casing moulds, it unwittingly unlocked a new revolution in Lambretta tuning.

Boom

For the likes of AF Rayspeed, Tino Sacchi and Richard Taylor, this was the signal to produce new big block cylinder kits, while other entrepreneurs would join in as the market opened up to levels not seen before.

This would become the boom time and guaranteed a future for the Lambretta brand, but there was another knock-on effect to all this activity.

As engines became more powerful and faster, they became more difficult to control and stop. New brake systems were developed, along with better shock absorbers and dampers. Ignition and lighting components followed suit, as did just about anything else that helped improve the overall performance of the Lambretta.

Just as Formula One technology filters down to the family runabout, this progress benefited all owners. Thanks to the way Lambrettas were constructed at the factory, parts compatibility across models was high and because these were being produced on a large scale, availability was very consistent. Once again it was possible to plan a build or an upgrade, draw up a list simply and place an order. It was like going back in time to when the Lambretta was in production.

Into the unknown

When AF Rayspeed announced that it was to launch a successor to the TS1, it became the most eagerly-anticipated kit in Lambretta history. It had been 20 years since the TS1's launch and the kit had served thousands of Lambretta owners admirably across the globe during its time. The announcement was clear, the TS1 wasn't being phased out, this was just a more powerful kit to complement the company's catalogue.

The idea was the same as the TS1; it could be bolted directly to a standard Lambretta case, this time with the promise that it would: "Take the standard Lambretta casings to their full potential," which it duly did.

Named the RB (after 'Ray' and 'Ben' Kemp if you've ever wondered), the kit's performance was phenomenal, and once new expansion pipes had been developed to suit its profile, 30bhp became the accepted standard of performance. Those wishing to bring a new kit to the market now had to offer performance past this benchmark, and this meant generating power from a Lambretta engine that, even a few years earlier, seemed impossible.

This would be a journey into the unknown and it would ultimately herald the arrival of 'super kits'.

Words and images: Stu Owen



Any component you could think of was readily available and vastly superior to the original

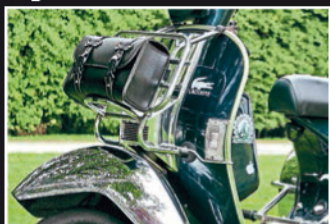
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Wishing everyone a Happy New Year



Happy Easter!!!

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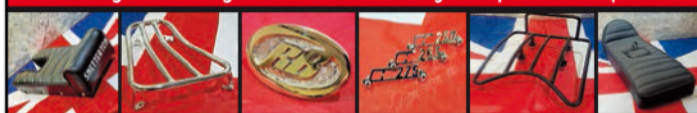
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LAMBRETTA



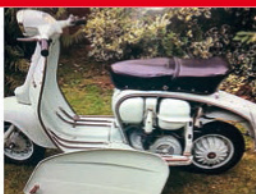
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VESPA PX125



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Lambretta Parts

LAMBRETTA GP 1979, Monza 225cc regd valve barrel piston, 30mm power valve carb, Gori exhaust, Varitronic ignition CDI regulator instructions, down tuning too fast for ride outs, £800 Tel. 07894 254621. Bedfordshire. Email. stevenholliman@yahoo.co.uk

PARTS FOR SALE: Lambretta LI125 Series 2 Italian parts, all solid parts in original paint job, no rot, all removed from my genuine Italian scooter, I also will throw in x 2 original Innocenti seats in black, with grab rail on rear of front seat, useable but could do with recovering, bargain sold as job lot, £150. Also thrown in a set of Scootopia front running board strips in stainless steel never opened and cost £90 Tel. 07706 105526.

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RACE CHAT

This month Paul Green chats with Dave Bristow, a man who wears many hats. Long-time scooter racer, chairman of BSSO, upholder of the smallframe racer, Team Hornet's head honcho and a skinny tall guy with spider legs.

PG: Dave, you've been around scooter racing a long time. Racing classes rise and fall in popularity over time, but in recent years you've been carrying the torch for Vespa smallframes. What's the attraction?

DB: My first race was at DISC85, I started on an SS90 and I raced that for about three years then, being honest, I just lost my bottle. I couldn't feel what the tyres were telling me. I liked doing engineering stuff and I bought a sidecar outfit from John Howe and I raced them for a few years. Then we were at Three Sisters and I saw Bob West putting his knee down. I thought, well if your knee's down then you're already on the floor. What is there to be frightened of? Street class was popular those days and it was easy to swap bikes so I had a go, got my knee down and the bottle returned! So the following year I went out on a Lambretta Group 4 and stuck with that for a few years.

PG: You drifted away from racing, then you came back in 2012. How did that happen?

DB: Once again John Howe was the culprit for getting me racing. He knew I had the Lambretta stuck away in the lock-up and

'encouraged' me to get back out, and I thought yeah, I'm turning into a boring bastard so why not! I hadn't realised just how much things had changed in Group 4 from the cast iron days to the new super trick Mugellos, but I went back out and it was really good fun. I was still running my cast iron and think I came fifth. There were some hard competitors around then and all the Conneely boys were out. I knew Ian Scutt, who'd been racing Bantams, and had a smallframe kicking around. I'd been doing some tuning and thought 'I reckon I could do something with this'. Although Ian was used to racing with a tank between his legs I built him the bike and put him on it. Unfortunately in '21 he told me that he was no longer able to commit. I was a bit fed up of blowing up Lambrettas so I'd built this DEA based engine that met group 4E regs. With Ian out of the running I thought I may as well take it out. The rest is history and I'm going to carry on doing it!

PG: So what do you like about the Vespa smallframes?

DB: There are pros and cons to a Vespa, but on a Lambretta you've got to climb right off

the bloody thing to be successful as you run out of ground clearance. It requires an awkward riding position that's physically difficult to maintain, after a race I just couldn't move and get off the bike.

PG: Yes, I get that, so many people don't realise how hard it is.

DB: I've got 57-year-old knees, not 20 years old, it hurts. I'm comfortable on a smallframe and they have great ground clearance, although I do look like a demented spider!





PG: Any other Lambretta plans?

DB: I still have the chassis so have let a new rider, Ben, use it next year and stick his engine in it. At Team Hornet we have Andrew Sharkey and Harry Smith racing smallframes and we all have so much fun that my daughter has now said she wants to race. She's going to start on a Zip so across Hornet we will have a spread of machines. I love Lambrettas and Vespas but smallframes have pros and cons, they are very squirrely round fast bends but they are so small and light. As I'm light we can punch heavily out of the corner; the Vespa doesn't need so much power to get ahead.

PG: What about John the Greek?

DB: He hates the smallframe's narrowness but loves the PX's wider handlebars. I blame that on the go-kart tracks he raced on in Europe. He still manages to put the exhaust down though, even on a mega clearance smallframe. Ground clearance is so important to me for confidence, we can be really relaxed, although less so on high-speed straights and fast corners. My SS frame has been strengthened but still weaves like crazy down the straights. On some fast corners it feels almost suicidal!

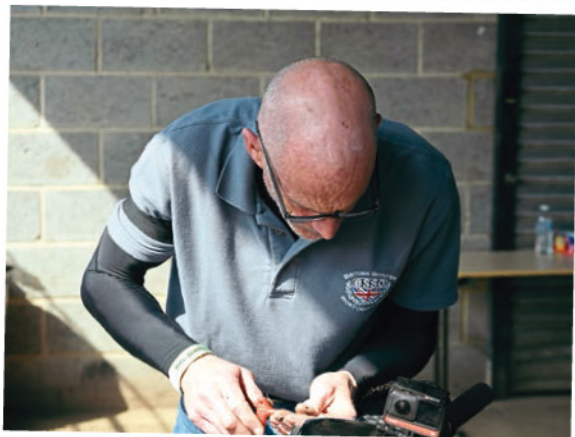
Having watched me, Tony O'Brien really helped me out with that. He suggested that I should just pump the tyres up way harder, and bloody hell it worked. I was able to just clear off. It still weaves down the straight though! The PK frames seem to weave less, maybe it's that they are slightly larger? Certainly Harry, Sharkey and John the Greek all love the PKs.

We have found that the lighter weight and ability to punch out of the bends gives us an edge, so then the Lambrettas have to catch us. I've developed a great braking system and we can outbrake pretty much anyone.

PG: How do the rules suit you?

DB: Dave Delaney developed a fantastic set of rules to allow the smallframes to compete





“ There are pros and cons to a Vespa, but on a Lambretta you’ve got to climb right off the bloody thing to be successful as you run out of ground clearance. ”

overall, their lower power and being nimble and light evens out. The smallframe engines have a lot of options for tuning, they’re certainly different from the Lambretta.

The task for this year for me is to try and win a class, which I’ve never actually done and I’ve been wondering why. I have a record of missing races so rarely do a full season and I’m hoping I can change that this year. I’ve a new barrel being worked on and some ideas to try and improve the handling. I love the engineering and just trying out different stuff. I’m the same with cars, I just want to take things apart and modify them. Just driving isn’t enough.

I do have a sense of how ridiculous it is racing these Italian shopping bikes. What the hell are we doing, but I’ll just carry on tweaking and experimenting.

I’ll try and get the SS engine nice and reliable and I will mess around with the handling but what I really want to do is get a 260 P Range built. It’s a whole new world of potential and it might fall apart but I don’t care. On one hand I’d like to win Group 4E, but on the other I don’t care if I don’t. A sounder bunch of guys to race with you couldn’t wish to meet, as long as I can keep edging faster I’m happy. To me, racing is like mediation; it requires total focus but is also a huge amount of fun. I always feel so good after it!

Words and images: Paul Green



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Contents in brief

106 Back when we had hair

Nostalgic memories from
times gone by

108 Through the Grapevine

A roundup of news and
niblets you may have
missed elsewhere

109 Update on a Vespa Queen

Remember our tale about
Guenevere? New owner,
Ian Hughes, brings her
story up to date

110 What's New

Powder to the people:
protecting your pipe

111 Mailbox

Readers air their views
and opinions

112 A springtime reunion

The tale of Bertie, a Vespa
Primavera ET3

116 Oriental origins

Little is recorded about
the production of PGO
Vespa scooters – we try to
help plug that gap

118 The Hondella

What's a Hondella, we
hear you cry? Well, the
clue's in the name, as
Brian Crook explains

122 Memorable moments from the past

David Sheppard
rediscovers more of his
scooter photographic
memories from the
1960s.

124 Scooter World 2023

After a prolonged Covid-
enforced absence, the
first major scooter-related
event of the year finally
resurfaces

128 Renovation not replacement

Plastic badge renovation
might not be on
everyone's list, but some
restorers like to retain old
original items

129 The Siambretta 175 AV

A unique Argentinian
interpretation of
Innocenti's Lambretta
Series

130 Scooter clubs and meeting places

Information and help with
finding a club near you

**Scooter World finally resurfaces after
three years of Covid-enforced absence.**

124

Don't be a stranger

In pre-Covid days all our magazine editors were based in a large open office, but unfortunately Covid has changed all that as each editor now works remotely. The unfortunate side of this means that on occasions, you can feel a little isolated; not sitting at an office desk can mean that you miss out on leads for future magazine articles, mainly due to missed phone calls and chance conversations with work colleagues.

If you aren't around (an editor is quite often out on the road) contact is made via our customer service department and sometimes things get lost in translation; this isn't their fault as they are dealing

with enquiries for all our magazines, discussing subjects they likely don't know much about. The result is that things can sometimes be misdirected to the wrong person (or even the wrong magazine). I want to try and avoid this situation; my internal office phone number is printed at the top right of this page; it diverts to my mobile so it should (in theory) transfer through to me. I don't want to miss out on the opportunity of future articles; if I don't answer it might be because I'm driving or busy with something else. Don't be a stranger; if you can't get through then try me again later.

Mau

Back when we had hair

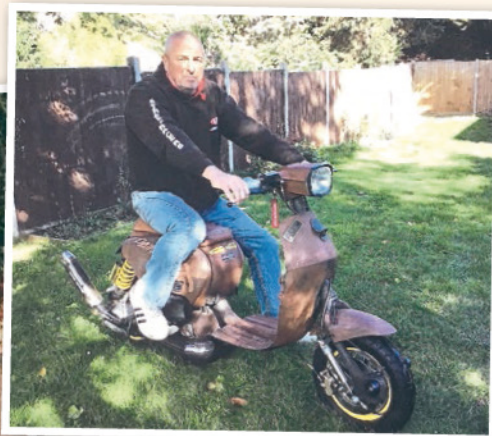
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35 years apart



The blue cutdown that I built in 1986. It was a full frame Jet 200 built and sprayed blue with blue and silver flake by myself. The motor was an AF 225 with a 30 mil Dell'Orto and over-the-kickstart AF Fresco pipe; I also had 105 pike nuts on it - I bet custom fasteners loved me.



Fast forward 35 years and this is my new scooter called Rusty Heap which I brought 'as is' from Tim who owns Paint FX in Kettering. My father passed away last year and so I bought this in his memory as he always said that I was crazy to sell the blue one after all the time and money I'd put into it. 'Rusty' is running a TS1230 JL4 and Mikuni 35mm with all the trimmings and it's nippy enough for a mature Scooter Boy.

Stewart Spidge Sparrow



When I was young

My first scooter, a Lambretta Li150 which was bought for £2 in 1970. It had a brush paint job, rack and flyscreen.

It required a new rear shocker and headlight to pass the MoT. Then it was taxed, insured and on the road for my 16th birthday - all for less than £10. Also shown is a picture of me back in the day.



Robin Feasby

Those were the days



Left: These are my parents and a friend, pictured here with my Lambretta GT. Back in the late 60s they said: "You shouldn't have one." And when I got to 70mph on the way back to Deal, I realised they were probably right! As for my GT; I needed a car, so it was sold off for a few quid soon after I was 17 (no idea where, to who or how much). Now aged 70, I've started looking for a more sedate 125 (and a cheap psychiatrist) at around £3500. I also look on eBay daily in case my old scooter resurfaces.



Not me here (sadly), but my brother-in-law Dennis, standing next to two admiring young ladies on Deal seafront outside the Quarterdeck. If this picture doesn't sum up the word cool, then I don't know what does. I still live in Deal, opposite the pier, not too far from where the picture was taken.

David Chmura

Camber Sands memories



Picture taken at Camber in 1999 – not sure what the joke with the watches was? Think they may have been freebies or something?



My band, The Hiwatts, playing at Camber in 2005. They were good times/bad times with many highs and lows. I think we'd just lost our old singer, who had played Hemsby 2004 with us and this pic was a very early Mk2 version of The Hiwatts.

Justin Harris

Back to the Eighties

Below: Travelling through France in 1982.
Frank Allison



Me and my fully loaded scooter pictured at Agay in the South of France – height of fashion, me...



Picture taken at Hell's Mouth on the Llyn Peninsula in Wales, around 1983.



A scooterist's tale

In March 1987 I turned 18 and decided to purchase my second Lambretta, having totally embraced all things Lambretta with my first one the year before. I had a few chats with Kegra and ended up having this Spaniard bespoke built; this was to be the only time I had a scooter built by the hands of others.

The Jet 200 was Spain's answer to the Lambretta; the project started out as a fancy paint build but with a standard 200 motor due to finance restraints on a vehicle of this age. The finance should have been over 36 months, but I paid it off in nine. Pretty much as soon as I got the scooter home, I hungered for a little extra power and set about sorting the motor a little (I had been fettling engines a little since the age of 14, but nothing serious). I got hold of the most basic of Lambretta tools and continued on my quest to learn more about engine builds. I already had a Motoplat ignition, so I had the flywheel lightened and fitted a nylon fan. I secured an old Royspeed 205 cylinder kit from Dougie Maye

at Alspeer (later Mayes of Hornchurch) and bought a 34mm Amal, Fresco (and later a Mikeck) and uprated the clutch to a six spring number, but kept the existing SX200 gearbox.

I loved the scooter and the way it rode and handled – it was quick for a scooter of its time. Many a good time was had, and many a mile crunched. The downside was that within six months, this scooter was hit six times from all angles (five of those times when it was simply parked up). The last time I was riding it, and a MkIII Cortina decided to switch lanes as I was about to pass on the opposite side of the road. In no more than a split second, I hit the car square between the headlights. The scooter went underneath and jammed under the sump; luckily, as he attempted to drive off, this foiled his escape. During this time, I got my pilot's licence as I went airborne over the top before crash landing somewhere behind the car, smashing my left femur in the process. The bone was split long and sideways and a section was never recovered – this resulted in several surgical encounters.

I did eventually recover the wreckage and did the minimum to get it back on the road. I later sold the scooter in its scruffy state and all these years later, the scooter is somewhere in Hampshire (although the engine resides in a different state of tune in another scooter, which is also in Hampshire).

Over 30 years later, I bought back the Lambretta I owned before this one, and now ride that again. Lots of dents and tales in this scooter though, and too many memories to mention. I loved the Eighties.

Lee James

SHARE YOUR NOSTALGIC PICTURES WITH OUR READERS

If you have any pictures from the past, why not share them with our readers. Call Mau on 01507 529408, or email him at mauspencer@classicscoterist.com

GRAPEVINE



THINGS OF INTEREST YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED ELSEWHERE

Classic Scooterist, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ ✉ mauspencer@classicscooterist.com ☎ 01507 529408



Vespa celebrates the Year of the Rabbit

The Chinese New Year commenced in January 2023 with celebrations for the Year of the Rabbit. This event symbolises an omen of peacefulness, well-being and respect for the past. To tie into this annual occurrence, Piaggio is planning the first stage of a new project which the company says will span the next 12 years; this will take the form of introducing a new scooter model annually, inspired by the lunar Chinese horoscope animal of that particular year.

Unfortunately for classic scooter riders, this doesn't mean that we can expect to see a new geared Vespa as part of that roll-out programme. Instead, it's more likely to be an updated take on one of its existing models – as is the case this year with the release of the Vespa 946 10° Anniversario which will be issued with a reworking of a classic Vespa green colour.

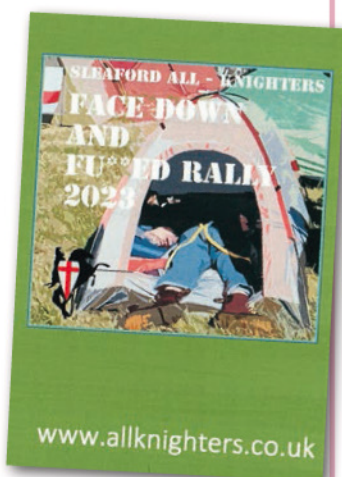
More details are available on www.vespa.com if you are interested.

Face down and Fu**ed

What seems to have become normal in recent issues is *Classic Scooterist* featuring a non-national scooter event taking place in 2023; and this time around, we focus on an event organised by Sleaford All-Knights.

Make a note in your diary for the weekend of June 16-18 this year, as that's the weekend this particular Lincolnshire-based club will be hosting their event at Sleaford Rugby Club, East Road, Sleaford (NG34 8SP). Several bands (including A Town Called Malice, Kingston and The Soul Bouncers) are already booked to play. They will be supported throughout the weekend by DJs, which include Voodoo Ray and Little Miss Modette. With the music side of the event taken care of, other weekend entertainment is already being planned, which will include games, trade stalls, etc. Camping and food stalls will also be on site over the weekend for those who require it.

Tickets can be pre-booked via www.allknights.co.uk – but don't leave it till the last minute, as this has become a popular event and you won't want to miss out on it.



Master socket set

Price guide: £249 | www.lasertools.co.uk

This master socket set of extra-deep metric sockets (part 8420) features a single hex (6pt) profile, with a 120mm depth designed to reach heavily recessed fixings.

The set includes 3/8in drive sockets from 6mm to 18mm and 1/2in drive sockets from 19mm to 21mm. There's also a 3/8in drive to 1/2in drive adaptor and a 1/4in drive to 3/8in drive adaptor for compatibility with existing tools. All manufactured from chrome vanadium steel.

Socket sizes included: 13 x 3/8in drive sockets: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18mm plus 3 x 1/2in drive sockets: 19, 20 and 21mm.



Ace diary dates for 2023

Amongst the plethora of 2023 events being held at the Ace Cafe, London, are some that might be of interest to scooterists. These include:

March 3: Classic Bike Day
March 26: Scooter Sunday
April 23: Ride It & Drive It Day (NSPCC Childline event)
May 7: Italian Bike Day
May 21: Two-stroke Day

May 29: Margate Meltdown
June 4: 'MAD' Sunday
Sept 9: Brighton Burn Up
Oct 1: Scooter 'n' Mod Special
Dec 17: Xmas Toy Run

Of course, there are many more events that might be of interest – head on over to <https://london.acecafe.com/meets/> for a full list.



Guenevere

– update on a Vespa Queen

Regular readers of *Classic Scooterist* might remember the article on a chance garage find from Kent, which featured in a recent issue. Happily, we have enough information to bring the royal lady's story up to date.

The recent H & H Auction at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham had, in pride of place, none other than Guenevere as a sales item; and, after heated bidding, the hammer went down at £8000. The new, proud owner is Ian Hughes, who adds this to the story...

"I had placed a bid a month before and forgot about it until the email came through. A fair bit of money though! Guenevere is now in West Sussex. It was a shame to have to wash off decades of dust, but to preserve the finish and stop the surface rust, I had to see beyond the grime. She will be kept exactly as is apart from new tyres. A bit of patience to get her cables and grips moving, a very seized carb that took a bit of persuasion. The electrics are fully usable. The paperwork is fascinating. A real shame that the original owner was not able to fill in the gaps from the years before."



When asked about any further work (like straightening the top of the legshield), Ian commented: "I did; I took the trim off and it was quite simple. I spent some time re-gluing the stickers and transfers back on the legshield."

Another item, but one annoyingly broken, was the side panel catch: "I ordered a new one; I should be able to take the catch and spring from it and replace the broken latch part, leaving the rest in place. I would doubt an original would turn up?"

Words: Ian Hughes/Dave Dry
Pictures: Ian Hughes



The original article from August 2022 issue.

WHAT'S NEW?

But the practicality of having something as beautiful, extravagant (and possibly as expensive) as a vintage saxophone to expel the red-hot products of combustion in all weathers, with all the road muck and possibly salt, if you're a hardcore, all-year rider, is quite frankly non-existent.

But even on a scooter that's used as a daily ride or touring machine, it's still nice to keep it looking something like presentable and protect the exhaust as best you can from the elements.

One possible alternative would be to powder coat the exhaust system, a route that's been around as long as I can remember, and which is fairly inexpensive and readily available.

The thing with this is that over time on a machine that's well ridden on a regular basis, the amount of heat generated by the exhaust gases and conduction from the barrel (especially at the U-bend or downpipe) can deteriorate and discolour the standard powder coating.

With ever developing modern technology, a High Temperature Powder product has now been available for a short while, which has been especially designed to cope with constant hot running temperatures and remain stable.

HAVING A BLAST

MSS Blast & Coat Workshop in Morley, West Yorkshire is one of the companies that has taken it on. Neil Heppenstall, the owner/operator of the business, and a scooterist since the early 1990s, has tested this new coating to the max to see if it does exactly what it says on the tin, which it does and then some.

Neil has demonstrated the quality of the product by holding a blow torch at a section of coated exhaust and getting the surface temperature up to more than 400 degrees Celsius without any issues. Not content with that, he baked a High Temperature Powder coated exhaust in his special pyrolysis oven for eight hours at a constant 400 degrees, then inspected the finish.

Neil says that the integrity of the coating remained intact, but the constant intense heat did remove the colour somewhat; but this was purely a destructive test to see how far it could go and it would be impossible to inflict this kind of treatment to the coating on a scooter exhaust in a real-life situation.

FANNY CRADOCK

The coating is suitable for use on new or old exhausts; even previously chromed or

PROTECTING YOUR PIPE

The exhaust pipe is one area that can add to or detract from the look of a scooter. Having a beautifully plated and/or engraved exhaust can really be the cherry on top, in regards to the engine side of things, on any custom scooter.



A fresh look for an old exhaust.

stainless-steel items can be coated and they go through the following process. They are baked in the pyrolysis oven at 350-400 degrees Celsius for a pre-determined period of time. This breaks down all surface contaminants such as dirt, paint, oil and carbon deposits inside and out, turning it to ash.

The exhaust is then removed and given a light sand blast using a medium grit media made from recycled broken bottles. Neil says, because all the hard work of removing the contaminants has already been done by the oven, this stage, in effect, just gently wipes away any remaining ash residue and etches the surface ready to accept the High Temperature Powder electrostatically.

The exhaust is then placed in another oven at 220 degrees Celsius to cure for 20 minutes. And that's it, a tough, heat-resistant coating to protect your pipe.

Only available in satin black at the moment (possibly silver in the near future), but as the



The thin 40-60 microns layer of powder coating.

technology develops so the colour availability should increase.

Prices are very competitive and start at £60 for a box-type standard Vespa exhaust upwards.

More info: www.mss-workshop.co.uk

Big Chris

YOU'VE GOT MAIL

Classic Scooterist, PO Box 99, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6LZ ✉ mauspencer@classicscooterist.com ☎ 01507 529408

Deep breath and hold...

Seeing that the new scooters no longer run on two-stroke oil, that heady eye-watering fog will be missing. I think there is a marketing opportunity to cash in on – two-stroke by-products.

I've applied to go on Dragons' Den to get an idiot with more money than sense to back me with the following products in order to bring the aroma of the garage/workshop into the living room:

FOR THE HOME

Two-stroke candles, melts, diffusers, air freshener and furniture polish.

Fly spray (it doesn't kill, it attracts them).

MANLY PRODUCTS FOR THE DISCERNING SCOOTERIST

Two-stroke deodorant, body lotion, soap and moisturising cream.

Two-stroke aftershave (a dab behind the ears – what woman would be able to resist)?

Two-stroke hair gel (a bit dodgy this one, as not many scooterists have hair).

FOR THE HARD SCHOOL SCOOTERIST

Two-stroke vapes, in order to get the fumes really deep into their lungs! (I love smoking, me – more than my own parents!)

And finally, two-stroke patches for those trying to wean themselves off the addiction. Christ! Open a window someone! My eyes are stinging!

[PS: thank you for printing my previous letter and the notoriety it brought me; I've been called many things in the past – mostly rude – but I feel you did me proud by using the description 'controversial'. Still, it's good to shake the tree and see what falls out of it. In my defence, I was under the influence of two-stroke fumes when I wrote it].

***Yours in hiding
Paul Jenner
The Odd Mod Squad***



Vespa GS toolbox question

I'm hoping to open the rear glovebox on my Vespa GS160 without drilling. I have the key, but the lock is stuck (I've already tried using penetrating oil and patience). Is it possible to remove the door? Any ideas?

***Edward Raschke
Minneapolis, Minnesota, US***

ANSWER 1: The door hinge is secured with two nuts under the back light. Remove these and the door can then be removed.

ANSWER 2: Take it to your local locksmith. Having seen this problem on steering column locks before, the locksmith was able to remove the key successfully and make a new one (some local locksmiths love a challenge).

[Many thanks to the FB Vespa GS160 Owners Club for sharing their expertise to solve this problem].

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Can *Classic Scooterist* help you find the answer? It doesn't necessarily have to be a technical question and can be about any scooter-related subject. If we don't know the answer ourselves, then we'll throw your question over to our readers to see if they can help.

Email scooterguru@scooteristscene.com with your questions, but don't expect an instant answer – sometimes these things take time.

F/O Douglas Petty, RIP

Dear Mau,

I'm very sad to report the passing of another of our honorary members, Flying Officer Douglas Petty, who died on December 31, 2022 (11 days short of his 100th birthday).

Doug flew with the RCAF from RAF Leeming during the Second World War as a flight engineer. He flew on 31 missions for Bomber Command (29 in the Handley Page Halifax and two in the Avro Lancaster). He always maintained that he had been lucky and had a good crew.

He was afforded a military funeral at the Church of St Lawrence, York on January 11, 2023, with a bearer party and honour guard from RAF Leeming. Members of York Inset SC were present to pay their respects to a very brave and modest man.

The last York Normandy veteran is now our club president, Ken Cooke (97).

***Nick Beilby
for York Inset SC***

[Nick, on behalf of Classic Scooterist readers, please pass on our condolences.]





Big Chris realises he's old, as he is once again reunited with a Vespa Primavera ET3 he imported almost a quarter of a century ago!

A springtime reunion

After searching through my PC looking for a lost image to include in a recent feature, I became sidetracked (as usual) and ended up wasting a good few hours reminiscing over old pictures, many long since forgotten about.

It was while daydreaming my time away that I came across some old picture scans of one of the Vespa Primavera ET3 machines that I used to import. Little did I know then that it would lead to a reunion of sorts, as that very scooter was still in existence, was in mint original condition and still owned by the couple who I sold it to, almost a quarter of a century ago.

WHERE THE HELL IS IT?

As I was looking for an old picture and trawling through the seemingly thousands of images of scooters that I've stored on my hard drive, aka my digital version of a very large cardboard box full to the brim with Polaroids, (I keep promising myself that I'll sort it out, into some chronological order, but never do) I found some old images of a beautiful brand-new smallframe Vespa that I imported.

As I'm a member of several Facebook pages dedicated to the 'smallies' and very much enjoy other people's images and contributions, I thought it was about time to actually contribute something myself,

so I posted the four images I'd found on to 'Tik's-Everything Smallframe' page for other members to enjoy.

It wasn't long before folk began to like and comment; a guy called Lee tagged in a lass called Tina Oakley, a name that didn't initially ring any bells with me, but then she replied and put a picture of her candy red ET3 Primavera on with the comment: "The absolute reason we bought Bertie; and he's still beautiful!"

That got me thinking; I replied, asking where she had got it from, to which she informed me that it was one that I'd supplied. I private messaged Tina and had a fantastic



Early ET3 road test by Scooter magazine.

text conversation about the machine, where it had been and where it was now. The following is Bertie's tale.

IN THE BEGINNING

Scooteroller, which is a combination of the Anglo and Germanic words for 'scooter', evolved out of my trading connections with the German scooter shops in the late 1990s. The name of my business was first thought up after a trip to buy a brand-new Vespa ET3 Primavera turned into a business opportunity to import these amazing, sporty and very desirable machines to the UK – a first since their official import ceased in the late 1970s.

It was November 1998 when I first ventured on to the continent, independently transported in any way; I'd been to France and Switzerland with my school as a kid, but had never undertaken such an adventure as a driver.

After 26 long but exciting hours more or less non-stop (barring fuel and comfort breaks) with about one-and-a-half hours nodding aboard a very bouncy ferry to Calais, I arrived in a pretty little town in Bavaria and a fantastic scooter shop called Der Rollerladen. This was on a traditional farm and everywhere I looked there were scooters. It was a mad dash of a trip and after loading up the first Primavera, then heading the 1000 miles back home, I was fuelled by adrenaline and buzzing about the deal that had just been done to import more of these beautiful scooters to England.

I returned to Der Rollerladen in a very snowy February to collect three more (two Candy Red and a metallic British Racing Green) plus a load of parts; at that time, the pound was very strong against the Deutschmark and everything seemed to be very, very cheap. It was on this trip that 'Bertie' was brought back to good old Blighty.

The story, so it was told to me, is that Piaggio would only produce the Primavera ET3 in batches of 200. These were a machine aimed at the Japanese market, as there was a big Mod, 60s retro revival out there at that



The scooter as it first arrived in the UK; the spare wheel was included as standard.

time and they couldn't get enough of it. So, if the Japanese importer ordered 150 then Piaggio would produce 200 and 50 would be spare to go elsewhere (hence why they ended up in Germany). They were also produced for the Italian home market, so could have quite easily found their way to Germany that way; but they were also fitted with German specification Hella bar end indicators with the wiring already in situ, as fitted in the Pontedera factory and not retro fitted. So, who knows what the real story was, and to be fair, I didn't care back then.

HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE

One of the Candy Red ones and the British Racing Green one were pre-ordered, which left one Candy Red one spare from that trip. This is the scooter which became known as Bertie and the main theme of this feature.

After deciding to take on the deal to import the ET3s, I'd taken a couple of pictures and embarked upon a Scooteroller advertising

campaign. This entailed sending a very basic black and white advert made by my Auntie Susan on her computer to Margaret Farquhar, (a wonderful old lass and a stalwart of the Vespa movement, who I had the honour of getting to know when I first joined the Veteran Vespa Club) along with a cheque for £5 for the privilege of it being published in the centre spread of the Vespa News.

I also sent a picture in to Scooter magazine, which was published along with a brief description and my contact numbers.

All I had to do now was to sit and wait for the phone to start ringing and for me to be ready with my freshly sharpened pencil and order book – Weyhe! Kerching! We're in the money!

But the phone fell silent apart from mi mam asking if I was going over for mi Sunday dinner that week, as she wo' back from t'caravan at t'coast early as the weather was poor and she was having no luck on t'prize bingo, cos it wo' a fix and that so-and-so in t'posh caravan over t'way allus won any road!

WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND (BERTIE'S TALE)



'Flat Eric', the hitchhiker picked-up on the way.

PLAN B

Always have a 'Plan B'! Mine was to contact *Scootering* and invite them up to come and have a go on one of the Primavera's to do a magazine feature. This they jumped at and Andy Gillard and photographer Alex travelled up to Grimethorpe to do the shoot and compile the feature.

This was the back end of the 1990s and the village of Grimethorpe had still not recovered from the devastating blow that had been handed down by John Major as part of the legacy of Thatcher, when the 'Pit Closure Plan' was so cruelly executed. The village was very ill, very close to death in fact, and where the once famous colliery had stood was the start of a fresh road that would become the Grimethorpe bypass, giving even less of a chance for any local business to catch passing trade.

But, what the as-yet-unopened bypass did give us was our very own Vespa Primavera ET3 test track for the day, and Andy made full use of it, at one point disappearing along it out of sight for ages, leaving me and a rather concerned-looking Alex wondering whether he'd nicked it...

LUNA DI MIELE

With the feature now complete and published (albeit a month later than expected), the phone rang constantly with folk wanting a piece of retro scootering style. One person to call was a guy called Peter. He said he was very interested in one of the Candy Red machines and came to view the last one we had in stock. He travelled up to Barnsley from Northampton to view the machine and ordered it there and then, paying the £500 deposit required to reserve it.

While chatting over a cuppa after the deal was done, he said that he was getting married soon to a lass called Tina and that they were



THEN: At the Italian border, just past Monaco.



THEN: At the Swiss border.

going to go to Italy on honeymoon. That's nice and a lot of folk do go to Italy after their wedding as it's a very romantic place to take your new bride on Luna di Miele.

What struck me as not all that romantic and somewhat of a big dream, was that the couple intended to go over by train to Italy with the little scooter, then ride it two-up, with luggage and tin cans on strings dangling from the back, all the way back home to England.

I wished him all the luck with a wry smile as I folded his £500 cash deposit and tucked it safely in my pocket.

The following weekend, with the scooter now registered, I delivered it to Peter in Northampton and collected the balance before wishing him all the best for his forthcoming wedding and big Italian adventure.

And that was it; I never heard anything about him, his bride Tina, or the little Vespa again until just before Christmas just gone, when I put the pics up on the Facebook site.

AREN'T SCOOTERING HOLIDAYS BRILLIANT?

After making initial contact via a personal message on Messenger, I asked Tina to give me a call as I was now intrigued with the scooter's story and how the trip to Italy went.

Tina said that it was July 1999 when they set off on honeymoon, Peter, herself and luggage all loaded up on Bertie, heading south to Dover for the ferry to Calais where they would get on the sleeper train. That was the plan anyway, but after missing the train they ended up spending their first night away in Calais, catching the Motorail train the next day.

After travelling overnight, the newlyweds awoke refreshed in Nice, where they disembarked the train with Bertie and set off easterly, crossing over the border into Bella Italia, making their first stop in Bertie's native country in the city of Genoa.

THEN: On the way through to Andermatt, Switzerland.



THEN: And back down the other side.



The happy couple spent the next week stopping in five different places on the Italian coast, just taking their chances with hotel accommodation as and when they were ready to stop overnight.

FLAT BEAT

It was then time to make the ride back home and a chance for little Bertie to show his true mettle. First stop north was Luino, on the side of Lake Maggiore, before rising what seemed to be ever upwards through Switzerland. Tina said that Bertie did need the occasional rest as the very new and still tight motor was getting a little hot going up mountain passes.

This was probably not only due to the motor being so new, the air being so thin and two-up, but also in part due to the fact that they'd picked-up a hitchhiker in Italy, so were now three-up, as they had won a 'Flat Eric', which was now strapped tightly to the back of the

backrest, staring back down the road as the traffic came up behind them.

Tina says that this caused plenty of amusement for the passing motorists as back in the day 'Flat Eric' was a big star.

After a mad dash and a full day on the German Autobahn, they made good time and after crossing the final countries, arrived in Calais for the ferry to Dover in plenty of time, arriving safely home a few hours later.

Tired, suntanned and saddle sore, but smiling from ear-to-ear with heads full of memories.

A REUNION OF SORTS

I did notice in the pictures that Bertie was sporting some rather non-original indicators, the reason being that some thieving scumbags stole him when they were still living in Northampton, but Peter chased them down the road and thankfully, they

dropped it. Luckily the only damage was to the rather sticky-out indicators, so they were just changed for some others and all was well once more.

Tina says that Bertie is now hers as Peter has got himself a Lambretta; the couple now live in Norfolk and occasionally get to the Skegness Rally, which is where I'll be trading, so I really do hope I will bump into them again as I'd love to see the little Candy Red Primavera ET3 who answers to the name of Bertie, again, after all this time.

By the way, I did ask Tina why the scooter was called Bertie, but she had no idea, he just is!

Fantastic! 🇬🇧

Big Chris

[Thanks to Tina for the info and pictures and also 'Tik's- Everything Smallframe' Facebook Group. Keep up the good work].



THEN: In Calais - almost home!

The headset packs a lot in.



Scooter still sports its original exhaust.



Model branding.



Wiring could sometimes be suspect.

The PGO Vespa



Err... We'll let you translate this one.



Italian smallie owners, eat your heart out!
The 100 Sport's removable side panel.

Very little is recorded about the production of PGO Vespa scooters; *Classic Scooterist* tries to plug some of the gaps.

The event that sparked off our interest in the PGO Vespa took place in spring 2022 when a PGO Vespa Sport 100 was sold to one of our readers, which resulted in us wanting to know more about the relatively unknown connection between Piaggio and the Taiwanese company PGO.

Now almost a year down the line, very little information has actually come to light, despite the employment of a variety of search methods. It would appear that in 1964, a Taiwanese scooter manufacturer founded a company called Motive Power Industry. That was the beginning, but then in 1972, the company entered into a technical collaboration with Piaggio which lasted until 1982 – and from this, a new scooter brand was born by taking letters from the Piaggio name (P i a g g i o) to form PGO Scooters.

DIFFERENT FLAVOURS

From our research, it would appear that the Vespa clones came in two different model variations; you could either go for a largeframe scooter, which was very much like an Italian P Series; or you could opt for a smallframe version (as per the pictures used to illustrate our article) which were fitted with removable panels – something the Italian 'smallies' didn't get. Many parts for both versions were interchangeable with their Italian siblings. The electronics on PGO-produced scooters were an awful mix of Italian engineering and modernised Taiwanese components.

SHORT & SWEET

And that is about it as far as our information on PGO-produced Vespas goes – but if anyone else out there can tell us more, we'd be interested to hear from you... 🇧🇪

Words: Mau
Images: Rich Addison



THE PGO BRAND

Over the years, PGO scooters have been sold in various guises in many countries worldwide; this includes the USA, Canada and the UK; they were also latterly bought in large quantities by the Danish mail company Post Danmark.

For years, under the supervision of successive CEOs, PGO has built up an efficient organisation to cope with the fast changeable scooter market with a variety of models under various names such as the Hooligan, Blur, Buddy, Roughhouse, the Bubu, G-Max and PMX models.

ED'S NOTE:
Over the period since we started talking to Brian about running this article, he suffered a nasty domestic accident. We wish him a speedy recovery.



The 'Hondella'

What's a Hondella, we hear you cry? Well, the clue's in the name – we'll let the owner and bike builder, Brian Crook, explain.

Some of you will know my interest (read obsession) for the Zundapp Bella scooter and as an owner of about 20 in various stages of restoration, I claim some reasonable knowledge of the marque. However, I have always hankered after developing a 'special/hybrid' based on the Bella, so I guess my interest in this direction was ignited by seeing the 'racing Bella' built by my friends in Germany. The scooter was based on a Bella with a Yamaha two-stroke 250cc engine; I think it's great, but very sadly, it will never be a usable road bike, due to the TUV regulations in Germany, and it has now become a museum piece. I was also inspired by an article in *Scooter*, where two Lambrettas had been fitted with Yamaha motorcycle engines – both equipped with very aggressive air scoops.

My thoughts were always around trying to transplant a Suzuki GT250 two-stroke twin cylinder engine into a Bella; and as I had previously owned a Suzuki GT250 in the 70s, there seemed a good synergy there. I got as far as procuring an engine and having the crank rebuilt, but due to problems in the engine rebuild, my enthusiasm for a special waned.

THE ENTHUSIASM RESURFACES

A meeting with a new Bella local owner many years ago started me on a new journey. The owner in question had bought a Bella R204, but wanted a more modern engine, and in return for some of the cycle parts for his scooter the original engine became mine.

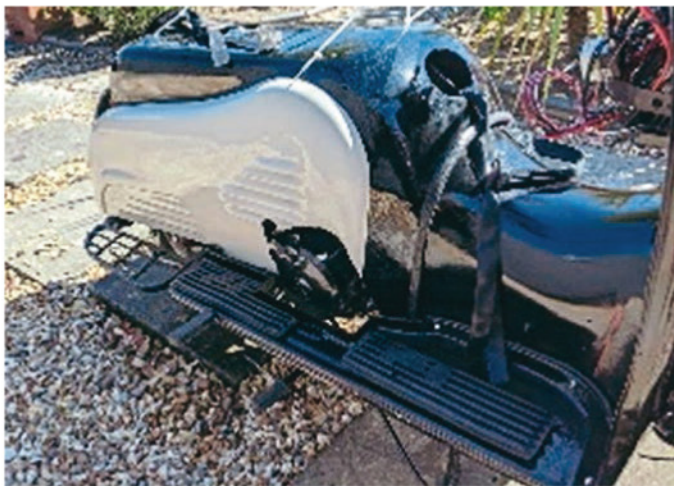
I then managed to lose contact with the owner and often wondered what had become of the Bella when, out of the blue, he contacted me asking if I wanted to buy the scooter. It was described as 90% complete, with some finishing required, and had been the subject of a transplanted Honda CD250U four-stroke twin cylinder engine. A set of pictures was supplied and it looked half-decent; with my interest fuelled, a viewing was arranged and what an interesting project it appeared to be. The owner had become more interested in motorbikes and had built a 'bobber' using all kinds of modern electrical toys, so the Bella was surplus to requirements. I'm not sure I made the right decision, but a deal was agreed, and it came home with me.

A MOUNTAIN TO CLIMB

Once it was on my bike lift, I really wondered what I had taken on. The wiring was pretty much incomplete and was based around the use of a gadget called the 'm-unit' – an ingenious device which takes its command from 'negative signals' from the various switchgear to one side of the unit; this then initiates outputs from the other side of the unit, and also contains fuse control of all the circuits it controls, indicating errors in any of the circuits on the LEDs of the unit. All the functions are highly configurable as well.

On perusal, the actual engineering to transplant the engine into the Bella frame had been conducted very well, but everything else started to worry me. The size of the engine had necessitated the fabrication of a fuel tank, which was just a welded-up box, lined with something that was already peeling off in lumps and holding a mere three litres of fuel.

The paintwork was pretty awful; the single Lambretta-type seats were perched on another steel box and much too high; the gearchange was just a piece of metal poking out from the side of the left-hand footboard – and so it went on.



On stripping the front forks, while the bottom race had the correct set of ball bearings, the top race was a totally unsuitable Lambretta caged race. I think it was at about this point I decided I needed to do a complete job on the scooter, and what a journey that has been.

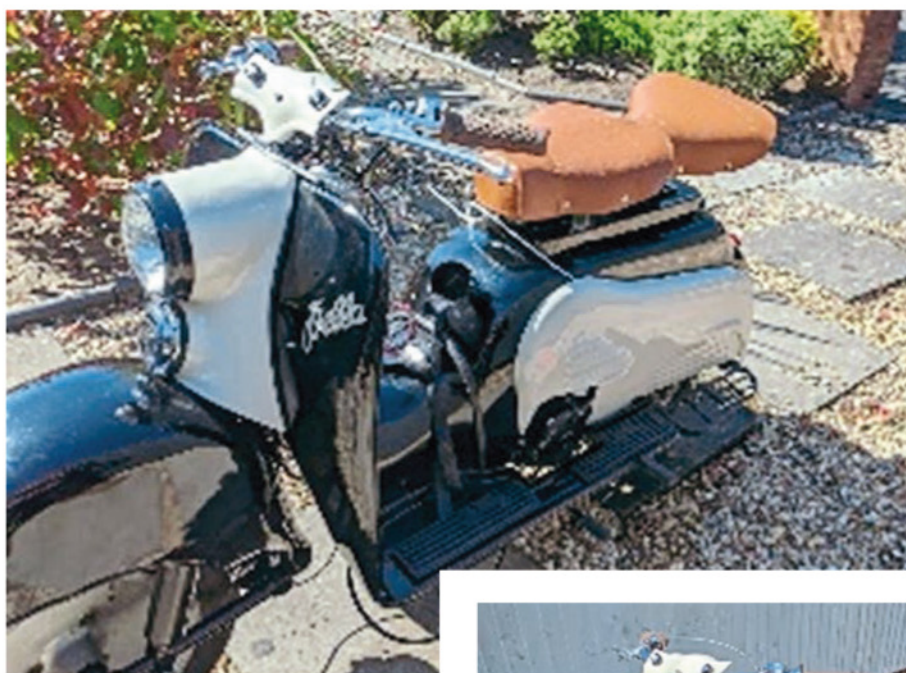
I decided I wanted to adopt and continue the electronic theme that the previous owner had envisaged, complete with keyless ignition (the components came with the machine), so that meant the production of a completely bespoke loom which would encompass all the electrical needs of the Honda engine, including the use of the standard CDI but building in a lithium battery and a lithium specific reg/rec. In addition, I had to incorporate all the other standard electrical functions of the scooter (i.e. lights, brake lights, indicators etc).

I literally spent hours designing the electrics for the scooter to completely embrace the Motogadget approach and use 'm-switch' push button switches on both sides of the handlebars, to handle the functions of indicators, lights, horn, and a config button for the m-unit, which is completely configurable. Another approach I decided on was to discreetly hide the wiring from the handlebar switches to the control unit, which proved extremely difficult.

The ignition is keyless, again using an 'm'-type device called the mo.lock and a programmed teardrop transponder.

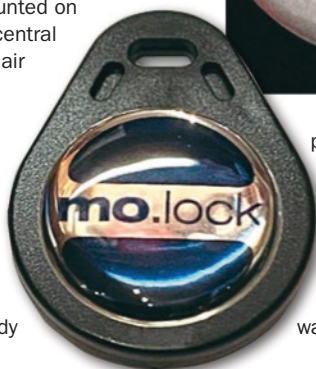
Early on in the build I was concerned as to how hot the Honda engine might run under the Bella bodywork, so an under-legshield air scoop was fabricated from 2mm mild steel sheet. After many hours of fabrication work, and on completion, I decided this was far too heavy and redid the whole thing in 1mm! Then thoughts turned to a fan to aid air throughput and the fan used came from a Honda Spacy and was mounted on a bespoke bracket to the central frame tube and inside the air scoop, complete with an override switch. A cylinder head temperature gauge was also fitted, with the LED readout housed in a bespoke mounting next to the standard battery box.

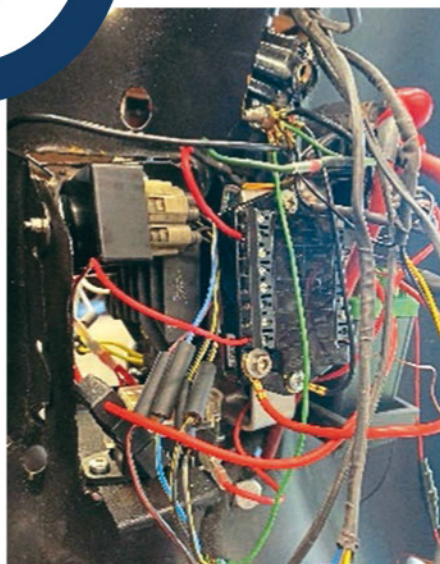
Also, to facilitate cooling, I cut additional holes in the rear of the body



panel alongside the original cooling vents, and a cut-out on the rear of the front mudguard, covered by mesh, was also done.

Given the poor state of the paint job I decided to go for the matt black rat look so all the panelwork was prepared for the rattle cans.





Again some serious problems emerged. The previous owner had very crudely welded in modified Bella inspection doors, chopped to avoid fouling the wider engine, to the main body tub, then slapped some standard filler into the voids – as soon as the body tub was flexed the filler cracked, and had to be dug out and redone with flexible filler.

I then asked a mate to weld up some badge holes on the legshields – and the legshield burst into flames! This was due to a huge wedge of filler covering a serious ding – so a replacement set of legshields was used.

I decided to use the standard Honda levers, and just about this time had a stroke of luck when my good friend Darren English decided to take a different front fork approach to the build of his Bella special and 'donated' a front swinging arm fork set-up that incorporated a big disc and Brembo four-pot caliper; so ideally the standard Honda lever/master cylinder was used.

Of course, all the cables then had to be designed with bespoke cables for the clutch, bespoke brake pipes, and an off-the-shelf throttle twist unit.

Then came the problem of the choke; with no real solution for fitment to the handlebars, I took inspiration from one of the last Bellas (the Bella 200) and fabricated a bracket which



allowed access to the choke knob through what is usually the Bella spark plug access on the body.

One thing I decided to incorporate early on in my thinking was a 'spoked' front wheel. The original wheel is a solid lump of aluminium, but I remembered one of my friends in Belgium had undertaken such a modification. A little bit of mathematics, resulting in the production of a suitable jig, and the holes were marked in pencil on the wheel. Then came the hard bit involving drilling three holes at each angle of the triangle cut-out then joining these with a jig saw. With this done, I undertook the laborious job of dressing back all the edges of the cut-outs which took many hours.

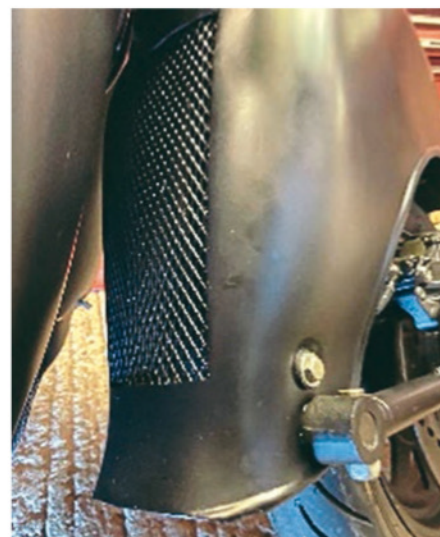
There were still many technical problems to solve – not least the provision of an appropriate fuel tank in what is now a very limited space; and I even went as far as to mock up a tank in cardboard, planning on getting one made.

I then thought I would try and see if a standard Bella tank could be 'modified', but this proved to be impossible. Then I had one of those eureka moments and tried one of the earlier model Bella tanks but back to front – and it was very close to fitting, albeit slightly too wide. Out came the grinder, Dremel and file and with what seemed more hours of



work, it was in. The only problem then was that the fuel outlet from the tank was lower than the Honda carbs! The solution was a vacuum pump on a bespoke bracket (or so I thought)...

Another mod I made was to dispense with the standard Bella rear suspension set-up of a pair of coil springs and one-sided shock absorber; this I did with the twin shock/spring set-up from MB Developments, which gives a far better solution. But when the tank was fitted with the tap it was going to foul on the wider tyre when on full depression. Solution was some slightly taller (20mm longer) spring/shock units. However, this spawned yet another





problem with the drive chain running very close to the swingarm, so a motorcycle-type hard rubber protector was fitted.

By this time, the ignition side of the electrics was wired up and it was with some trepidation I fixed up an auxiliary fuel tank, changed the engine oil, then pushed the button – and it started! But what a racket it made with the ‘cobbled-up’ exhaust blowing like mad. The original CD250U has twin exhausts, but the previous owner had configured a two-into-one arrangement running to a Motad silencer on the right-hand side, utilising convoluted exhaust piping to the original stubs from the engine. So, all this was replaced with new pipe and longer stubs and the correct clamps, and then heat wrapped.

When I started it again, the noise was far sweeter. I then started to ponder how I could make the gear change lever more usable and came up with a novel solution of using half of the standard Bella rocker gearchange (which is usually on the right-hand side footboard) pivoted on the front frame support bar, and through a new hole in the left-hand footboard, then connected to the gearchange output shaft by an adjustable rod – not perfect as the gear movements are now one-up for first, then four-down to fifth; but at that stage it was considered usable.

Next was the provision of a braking mechanism to the standard Bella rear drum brake/sprocket, which is usually a rod arrangement to a heel pedal on the left footboard, but the position of the gearchange necessitated the positioning of the pedal to the right footboard in a position similar to a Lambretta but operating on a heavy-duty cable to the standard Bella rear hub. This necessitated a bespoke cable plus lots of bespoke bracketry front and back, and a bespoke fitment for the brake light switch.

While I had the scooter rear tyre lifted off the bike lift, I tried out the clutch and it failed to disengage – which I surmised was from standing for so long. Rather than trying to shock the plates free, I decided to fully strip the clutch and found the fibre plates glued to the metal plates, so a full set of plates was fitted. I forgot to mention the specialised Honda tools to remove the clutch, but once reassembled the clutch works perfectly.

Still the problems (opportunities?) came.



Once the engine was running, I didn't seem to be getting a charge to the battery, and although I changed the generator the problem persisted. So, thoughts turned to the very expensive lithium compatible reg/rec, and with a quick tutorial on YouTube, I learnt how to check diodes. The negative side of the reg/rec checked out perfectly, but nothing from the positive side – which was a disaster given the cost of the unit, bought months previously and non-returnable to the US.

And then again, a eureka moment. In the live feed to the battery from the reg/rec I had incorporated a blade fuse holder that came with the scooter – yes you guessed it, the fuse had gone!

Once this major setback was averted, it was time to finalise all the electrics including integrated daytime running lights/progressive indicators on the front and multi-function brake/progressive indicators on the back, the fitment and wiring of the cylinder head temperature gauge and the fitting of a pair of spotlights on the legshields. The latter of these things again proved challenging as the rubber mounts provided were shaped to match the more severe curve of Lambretta legshields – lots of cutting and shaping was required to fit to the Hondella, but the result was well worth it in the end.

A bespoke legshield badge was laser cut by a local artisan to reflect the ‘Hondella’ name, and as a homage to my country, an enamel badge of the flag of St George was added.

As with all projects, finish targets came and went as the hours racked up. My final target was to have it ready for the Preston Wildcats SC Selection Box run in aid of the children's ward at the local hospital. I was actually working on the scooter the evening before the event and other than a quick whizz up our cul-de-sac, there was no shakedown run. So the dilemma was, do I go and risk it, or pull one of the standard Bellas out of the garage? Somewhat foolhardily I decided on the Hondella; and on the ride to the meeting-up spot, I took time out to do an atmospheric photo to reinforce the point that this machine was ‘made’ in my hometown of Leyland.

I'd like to say everything was okay, but I'm sure no custom builder would believe me. Two major issues almost scuppered the ride,



the first one being a ‘slipping’ chain – it was only part way through the ride I got yet again another eureka moment when I remembered I had used the chain that came along with the scooter and it might just be a 520 and not the 428 on which my sprockets were based (later inspection proved this to be the case).

While on the subject of sprockets, the ratios were awful with crazy acceleration, but a poor top end – this will be rectified. My bespoke choke lever bracket fell off and I really need to alter the gear changing to a more conventional one-down, four-up.

But it showed great promise, and was worth all the blood, sweat, cursing and incalculable hours spent on its creation.

Would I do it again? Maybe. It's time to get to work on the Suzuki engine...

Words/images: Brian Crook





My Vespa Clubman which was given to me.
I painted it with cans. This is the bike I passed my test on.



Memorable moments from the past

David Sheppard rediscovers more of his scooter photographic memories from the 1960s.

We first published a few of David's pictures way back in 2020. Since then, more images have resurfaced, so that in effect brings his story up to date. And if any eagle-eyed reader thinks a couple of pictures seem familiar that is because a couple of them were used in the original article, but we had a bit of space to fill so we've reproduced them again.

Since David's early scootering days, life has moved on for him. He currently has three Vespa scooters residing in his collection – a 1960 GS150, a 70th Anniversary PX150 and a GTV250. He also has a Harley 1200S Sportster which he has owned since 1996. 🇬🇧



Me on my SS180 in the mid-1960s.
I purchased it from Elite Motors in Tooting. I mainly used it for commuting to work from Clapham to The Aldwych in London, where I worked for a firm of patent and trade mark agents.



A rare colour picture of my SS180.



This photo was taken when I accompanied my brother on a camping trip to South Wales. My brother was riding his motorcycle. It was quite rare then to see a motorcycle and scooter travelling together!



Back in the day, I was a member of Crystal Palace Vespa Club.



The girl in these photos is my wife Sue, who I met at Crystal Palace Vespa Club in 1966. We married in 1970 and are still together; we are also still active members of the Veteran Vespa Club.



AUSTRIA
Argentinierstrasse, 71, Vienna.
BELGIUM
rue de Peuplier, 17, Brussels.
DENMARK
Espinaden, 6, Copenhagen.
FRANCE
rue de Tilsiet, 5, Paris 8e.
GERMANY
Siebenbrunnerstrasse, 30, Augsburg.
GREAT BRITAIN
Hanham Road, Kingswood, Bristol.
HOLLAND
Hoffstedeweg, 9, Overveen.
ITALY
via Trebazio, 5, Milan.
JUGOSLAVIA
Prilaz JNA, 32, Zagreb.
LUXEMBOURG
50, Reckensthal, Luxembourg.
NORWAY
Haumannsgaten, 27, Oslo.
PORTUGAL
Ave. Infante Santo, Lote 22, Lisbon.
SPAIN
Atocha, 123, Madrid.
SWEDEN
Karlavagen, 67, Stockholm.



THE
VESPA
CLUB
OF
BRITAIN

HANHAM ROAD,
KINGSWOOD,
BRISTOL.

Tel. - Bristol 674784.

The person named on this card is a registered member of the Vespa Club of Britain and is affiliated to the Vespa Club of Europe until

31 DEC 1965

This card is not transferable.
IAN KIRKPATRICK
General Secretary

D.I. Kirkpatrick
Member's Signature

Also valid in the countries named on the reverse.

Membership No. 765112/565
Name. IAN KIRKPATRICK
Address. 14, TREAZIO ST., LONDON, S.W.4
Club. VESPA CLUB OF BRITAIN

I was also a member of the VCB.



Scooter World

January 7-8, 2023

After a long Covid-enforced absence, Scooter World finally resurfaced at Newark Showground with a bang!

The return of this event had originally been planned to take place in January 2022, but at the 11th hour, Boris reintroduced Covid restrictions just a week before the show – only to lift them again just a week after the planned event date. All our intricate show preparation plans were left well and truly in tatters.

In September 2022, the Scooter World team regrouped to start planning the 2023 event, all the time hoping that we wouldn't suffer the same fate. This time, the gods were in our favour, so a cold but dry Friday preceding the event in early January found the team hard at work in and around the scooter halls.

EARLY MORNING RUSH

Saturday morning saw the official Winter Classic event open to the public and as usual, it took a while for punters to migrate down to the scooter halls which were located at the far end of the site. There had been a few minor hiccups prior to the opening; this was mainly down to the virulent flu epidemic that swept through the UK over the Christmas period, resulting in a number of stall holders and private entries pulling out at the last minute, leaving the scooter team with the task of having to fill/hide now vacant pitches; unfortunately, most of these were in the main scooter display hall. I must give all credit to

the team in the way they resolved the problem – it wasn't perfect, but then last-minute problems rarely work out too well.

On both days, attendance in the scooter halls followed a similar pattern with it taking around an hour for punters to reach us from the show entrance at the far end of the site. They were then treated to a vast array of scooters to suit all tastes to drool over, while the space around the trader stalls thronged with punters eager to make their purchases.

THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE(RS)

As has become tradition over the years, the end hall has morphed itself into a combined sport/fire-up arena and within this area sat a variety of scooter sport organisations which included representatives from both BSEC and BSSO as well as other sport-related clubs and privateers. And at certain points on both days, the area becomes the place where these enthusiasts get the opportunity to fire up their machines and discuss their merits with the main show host, Steve Plater, and the show's special guests this year, James Whitham and Carl Fogarty.

Last-minute special scooter show guests were Italian scooter specialists, Casa Performance, represented at the event by Marco Pennesi and Micky Carlini, who had



Norman Ronald's show winning scooter.

promised to bring the real two-stroke fog to the event – and they did just that by firing up their Casa twin Lambretta which was packed with all the latest tuning technology. This, without doubt, turned out to be the most videoed and photographed part of the event; and when asked by Steve Plater about the cost of one of these engines, Micky Carlini explained prices started at five figures and rising according to engine spec. Steve Plater asked the audience if anyone would be willing to pay that sort of money – I think he was shocked by the number of hands that went up.



The Casa Performance demonstrator – one of the main attractions for scooterists at the show.



It's all smiles on the Team S Equipe stand.



Brian Clough's scooters being sketched by an illustration artist for possible use in a future technical book.



Without the Scooter World team, this event would not have been possible, so thanks go out to Pete Newbold, Daz Kane, Mark Chambers, yours truly, Dave Walker, Norman and John Ronald, plus Alan Cooper (not pictured for some reason – I need to sack the photographer).



TT winner, Steve Plater, admires a picture of himself competing on the Isle of Man – as portrayed on Nick Prince's custom Lambretta.



From left: Marco Pennesi and Micky Carlini (Casa Performance) who attended the show courtesy of Paul and Angela Gillow (Oiltek).



Looks like Marco Pennesi from Casa Performance is checking out the technical aspects of 1960s scooter competition.



Carl Fogarty (right) shares a joke with Steve Plater and James Whitham.



Keith Terry talking to Steve Plater about racing his scooter in the BSEC Series.



An early take on a Lambretta twin cylinder set-up.



Even Casa Performance stops for lunch...



Sprint champions Richard Baker and Pete 'Nippa' Bourn reminisce about the old days (the bits they can remember that is)....





ROY COLLINS' MV AGUSTA

Displayed in the main motorcycle show hall, Roy's concours condition 1951 Ovunque 125cc won a trophy for Best in Show.

The Ovunque was only produced for a few years before MV took a break from scooter production, returning in 1960 with the Chicco. Roy's restored machine is an example of the rare Ovunque Special model, featuring an upswept exhaust, whitewall tyres, pillion saddle and additional chromed trim.



MARTIN ROBINSON'S LAMBRETTA



Martin's Model D Racer won the Best Continental trophy after he decided to enter his scooter at the last minute.

JUDGE FOR YOURSELF

Mid-afternoon on Sunday saw the presentation of the scooter trophies. Personally, I don't like judging custom shows, mainly because individuals always have an opinion on what should have won or not. And with so many scooters on display, the show judges had their work cut out on this occasion; this also turned out to be a bit of a dilemma – what do you do when there isn't anything on display that pigeonholes into a certain category? But they worked around that with a bit of improvisation

and came up with a solution to the problem. It's never an easy situation to be in.

Overall, apart from the regular moans about being too close to a radio speaker, or a draughty door, the event went down well with everyone we spoke to. We hadn't quite known what to expect after a three-year absence, so the positivity of everyone was quite welcome. We hope to see you all again next year. 🍷

Words: Mau

Images: Rich Addison, Helen Prince and Mau



Graham Fisher.



Alan Smith and Stuart Day.



Micky Carlini.



Roy Winters.

SCOOTER WORLD 2023 TROPHY WINNERS

The awards were presented to the winners by John Ronald. However, not every winner was present for the awarding of their prizes; consequently, not all are pictured here.

(All award winners receive a year's magazine subscription plus a cash prize. If you were one and have not been contacted yet by the event organisers, then please ring 01507 529470).



Norman Ronald.



Stuart McNeill.

BEST IN SHOW (+ £100)

Lambretta Vega - (Norman Ronald)

BEST SCOOTER CLUB DISPLAY (+ £100)

Arrows SC - (Stuart Day/Alan Smith)

BEST CUSTOM SCOOTER (+ £50)

Li Cutdown, OJE 621 - (Tony Beeton)

CLUB'S CHOICE (+ £50)

'Mad Manx' Lambretta S2 - (Nick Prince)

BEST LAMBRETTA (+ £50)

1962 Lambretta Rallymaster - (Alan Smith)

BEST VESPA (+ £50)

Vespa SS180 Mona - (Stuart McNeill)

BEST OTHER (+ £50)

Maicoletta, TES 611 - (Roy Winters)

BEST ORIGINAL-LOOKING (+ £50)

Vespa Rod Model, UPE 782 - (Matthew Phillips)

BEST ENGINEERED (+ £50)

Casa Performance Twin Demonstrator - (Micky Carlini and Marco Pennesi)

BEST MODDED (+ £50)

Lambretta GP - (Craig Ellis)

BEST STREET RACER (+ £50)

Lambretta GP, RRR 425M - (Peter Bourn)

JUDGES 'SPECIAL AWARD' (+ £50)

Rumi, 322 YUD - (Graham Fisher)

10 'highly commended' rosettes were also awarded.



Tony Beeton.



Peter Bourn.



Nick Prince.



Alan Smith.

A FINAL WORD FROM CASA PERFORMANCE

We would like to thank you all for supporting us during the Winter Classic Show.

It was a very successful experience showing the 'Beast' fitted with the CP250 Twin LC live on stage several times.

We also won the Best Engineering trophy and received many compliments from the crowds of both scooterists and motorcyclists.

It has been a big pleasure sharing the experience with Superbike racers Jamie Whitham and Carl Fogarty; they were well impressed by the quality and the sound of our motor.

We'd also like to thank Paul and Angela Gillow of Oiltek who invited us to join them on their stall during the event.

Marco and Micky
Casa Performance



Damaged Piaggio badge - front.



Damaged Piaggio badge - rear (note blackened area with no gilding).



Restored Piaggio badge - front.



Restored Piaggio badge - rear.

Plastic badge restoration

Badges are possibly not on the top of the list for items thought suitable for refurbishing when considering what to do with old vintage scooter parts; but some amateur restorers like to retain and repair old, original items rather than replace with new stock items.

However, there are problems in the case of both the plastic legshield badges as fitted to Vespas and the rear model type badges fitted behind the seat on some Lambrettas.

It's often found during the process of removal that the finish applied to the back of these transparent badges tends to be damaged by the finish flaking off as they are removed during the stripdown prior to, for instance, spraying. The original finish to these badges is a mixture of paint and a form of silver 'gilding' to give a chrome-plated look. Both are applied to the rear surface of the plastic badges in question.

To reapply the painted part is pretty straightforward using a steady hand and the paints available for model aircraft kits, but the silver is not so easily replicated. If the badge is touched in with silver paint, the silver end product is far removed from the chrome-like

original and will look a not terribly impressive almost grey colour.

THE SHINY BITS

To try to replicate the chrome-like original finish to these badges, it's quite possible to utilise the silver gilding foil as used on, for example, picture frames. This extremely thin metal material is both cheap and freely available from arts and crafts suppliers, but needs a gentle touch on application, as it is very fragile in use.

One way of applying gilding foil to these badges is to firstly spray on an adhesive such as contained in a 'spray mount' aerosol to the back of the badge before gently laying the foil in place and carefully dabbing it down with a soft cloth. Should the foil not cover the required area, or become detached in localised areas, a further layer of foil can be added to cover any imperfections.

FINISHING TOUCHES

To complete the job, seal over the gilding foil with a coat or two of matt varnish (again, as sold in small tins meant for aero modelling or model railway purposes). This will give a firm protective surface for the double-sided tape used to fix the Vespa badges in place, or to give a somewhat more protective layer to prevent damage when refitting the Lambretta frame badges inside their alloy framework.

Vespista

The Siambretta 175 AV

A unique concept of a Lambretta where considerable ingenuity has been exercised to produce an agreeable-looking machine that has its very own aesthetic beauty and style.

In Argentina, the Lambretta was built under licence by Siambretta of Cordoba, south of Buenos Aires. Its model type production followed the traditional Italian lines except for the 175 AV – an original design that featured an interesting combination of both the quality of the Lambretta Li Series with the simplicity of the Model D.

The country had a long history of large-scale Italian migration, which resulted in close business ties between Italy and Argentina. Innocenti, as an example, had operated a large steel tubing subsidiary in Argentina for a number of years.

CHANGING THE BALL GAME

In 1964, Siambretta decided it needed something different to bring to the already swamped scooter market and so a decision was made to design and manufacture a stripped-down scooter using the TV model as a starting point. Siambretta called its new scooter the Super Standard Argentina Veloce 175 – the scooter was obviously very different from a standard TV175.

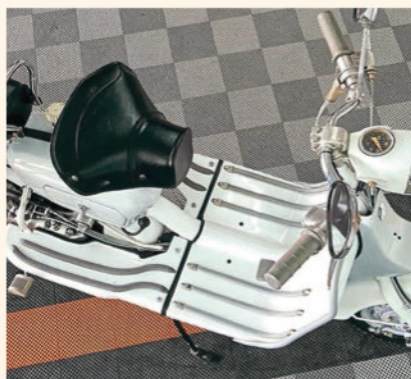
The visually obvious main departures from the standard TV175 design were the fuel tank and incorporated toolbox that also served as a base for the front seat with the toolbox lid to the gearbox side and the petrol tank to the carb side. Other unique new items redesigned for this scooter included the front mudguard, a shortened horn casting and shortened front legshield with rear footboards to match; the back mudguard and rear light unit were also model specific.

To complete the visual differences of the machine, the rear seat was fitted to a bracket on the top of the main frame tube. The air filter was of the Lambretta D type as were the handlebars, both borrowed from that earlier Lambretta design.

Production of the AV commenced in 1964 and it was still being sold in kit form up to 1973.

You could argue that this very basic Siambretta scooter design might have built by Innocenti instead of venturing into the huge costs of producing the Vega/Lui concept. Perhaps, Innocenti missed a trick and should have built a stripped-down DL/GP along the lines of the AV instead? 🇨🇮

Words/images: Darrin Slack



BUCKS

TIN SOLDIERS SC

Meet every Saturday from 9.45am at Captain Ridley's Shooting Party (Wetherspoons), MK2 2ED. Monthly meet at same venue, but first Thurs each month from 7.30pm. Info via Facebook: Tin Soldiers Scooter Club.

DORSET

POOLE INNERCIRCLE SC

We are a mixed club of Lambrettas and Vespas. We meet at the New Inn, Poole on the first Wednesday of the month with a rideout every month. More info via Poole Innercircle Scooter Club on Facebook.

ESSEX

CLACTON SCOOTER COLLECTIVE

Find us on Facebook for information on club meets and road trips.

WRITTE INTERNATIONAL SCOOTER COLLECTIVE

All scooterists welcome. Info via Facebook 'Writtle International Scooter Collective'.

FLINTSHIRE

SC FLINTSHIRE

Meet Weds at The Boot, Northop CH7 6BQ. All scooter riders welcome. Contact via Facebook at 'Scooter Club Flintshire'.

THE NORTHERN ACES SC

Deeside (North Wales border). We welcome classic scooterists. Meet Weds at the Castle Inn (Hendeyes), Brook Road, Shotton, Flintshire CH5 1HL. Info: Rich 01244 823112 or Coaty 07872 953780.

KENT

INVICTA SCOOTER CLUB

Meet first Friday of month in Medway and ride out twice a month on Sundays. All welcome. Contact via Facebook or email markgolding@hotmail.co.uk

MEDWAY ACES COOTER CLUB

Meet at The Bell Pub, Bredhurst on the first Thursday of every month at 7.30pm. All welcome. Rideouts all through the summer months.

Find us on Facebook or contact Adrian. carter@googlemail.com

LEICESTERSHIRE

LASC

Meetings on Wednesdays and Sundays. based at The Counting House, Leicester. Find us on Facebook: Leicestershire Alliance Scooter Club. Contact Zak on 07967 732183. All welcome. No subs, just pups.

LEICESTER PHOENIX SC

Meet on Wednesday evenings from 7pm at the Fairfield Public House, Gloucester Crescent, Wigston, Leicester. All welcome. Contact: Mitch 07857 590095 for info.

LINCOLNSHIRE

BOSTON SC (UNOFFICIAL)

The club has up to 30 scooterists on its Wednesday night rideouts. Classic geared scooterists are our mainstay, although autos are always welcome. Scooter rallies are regularly attended. Find us on Facebook under Boston Scooter Club (unofficial!)

GENERATIONS SC

All scooterists and scooterists welcome. Visit 'Generations Scooter Club Horncastle' Facebook Group for details.

SLEAFORD ALL-KNIGHTERS

Meet Wednesday nights at The Barge & Bottle. Contact us via our Facebook page at 'Sleaford All-Knighters Scooter Club' or visit www.allknightscc.co.uk

LONDON

FORESTERS SC, EAST LONDON/ESSEX

New members are always very welcome, whatever they ride. Our club meetings are held every Wednesday night from 6.30pm at the Horse and Well pub, 566/568 High Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0P5. For more info contact Allen on 07743 371315.

MANCHESTER

SOUTH MANCHESTER NITE OWLS SC

Meet every other Tuesday at the Sun Inn, 210 Guide Lane, Audenshaw, Manchester, M34 5EE from 7.30pm onwards. Contact Gaz Mac on 07969 001325 or see us on Facebook.

NORTH & CENTRAL MANCHESTER SC

Meet at the Old Nags Head, off Deansgate, Central Manchester, every other Tuesday from 7.30pm onwards. See us on Facebook for rideouts etc.

SOUTH MANCHESTER SC

Meet second Wednesdays at Ye Olde No.3, Lymm Road, Altrincham, WA14 4TA. Find us at www.facebook.com/groups/283974489094226/South Manchester Scooter Club. Info: (07488 228897 or stevemills540@gmail.com).

MIDLANDS

BIRMINGHAM ACES

Meet at the Urban Village, Digbeth, Birmingham, on Saturdays and last Sunday of every month at The Shakespeare, Birmingham city centre. Email sut7@hotmail.co.uk

COLLIBOSHER SC

Meets once a month at The Bell Inn, 12 Birmingham Road, Coleshill B46 1AA (ring to confirm). During summer months, this is coupled with a rideout; during winter months, this changes to a monthly afternoon meet at a local cafe or restaurant. Info, Darren: 07870 521914.

EMSA (EAST MIDLANDS SCOOTER ALLIANCE)

Looking after all the interests of all the scooter clubs and individuals based within the East Midlands and surrounding areas. Email eastmidlandsscooteralliance@hotmail.com or search for them on Facebook via East Midlands Scooter Alliance (EMSA).

NORFOLK

SIDEWINDERS SC

New members always welcome, rideouts, day trips and much more. Subs due January 2023. Info: robraven@outlook.com

NORTHERN IRELAND

A2 ACES SC

Meet the last Sunday of each month in the Royal Oak Bar, Carrickfergus at 11.30am. Weekly runs most Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons. Check out our club Facebook page: 'A2 Aces Scooter Club'.

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE

LOST & LONELY SC

Based in the Isle of Axholme, North Lincolnshire, between Scunthorpe, Gainsborough and Doncaster. Club meets regularly at the Ingleby Arms in Amcotts at 7.30pm on first Tuesday of month. We are an informal club of both male/female Lambretta and Vespa owners. For more information contact either Trevor (07947 725375) or Paul (07745 162760). Website: <http://lostandlonelysc.com>

NOTTS

WORKSOP MOD APPRECIATION SOCIETY

Meet Wednesdays at the Sherwood Ranger, High Road, Carlton in Lindrick. All are welcome to join in for a drink and a chat. For info phone 07935 433454 or via Worksop Mod Appreciation Society on Facebook.

STAFFORDSHIRE

STONE SCOOTER CLUB

Based in Stone and established in 2013, we are a friendly bunch of scooterists with a good number of loyal members. The club meets on Wednesdays at The Bridge from 8pm. Phone Len for info on 07702 874241.

SURREY

OLD GITS SCOOTER CLUB

Meet every second and fourth Sunday of the month from 7pm at The Railway Tavern, North Street, Carshalton, Surrey. Everyone is welcome. For information email markoldgitscc@gmail.com or phone Mark on 07976 950377.

CHEAM LAMBRETTA & VESPA CLUBS

Clubs meet jointly at the Prince of Wales, Cheam Village, Wednesdays from 8pm. Cheam Lambretta Club contact: Eric Jones (01276 23757). Cheam Vespa Club contact: Paul Roger (07986 258027).

WARWICKSHIRE

CV COLLECTIVE SC

Meet most Sundays at 9.30am at the Grill Shack, Coventry CV65RF for a cuppa and a bite to eat before we ride out; when the weather's better, we venture out at least one night a week. We welcome anyone who shares the same interest in the scene; that goes for all scooterists, genders or age; we pride ourselves on being a friendly, no drama club. Find us on Facebook 'CV Collective Scooter Club' or contact Sean (07933 265122) or Rich (07500 666599).

WOLVERHAMPTON

WV1 SC

Meet at the Nickelodeon Pub, Bentley Bridge, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton WV11 1BP. Contact Zac Beech (07543 969415) or Evo (07718 210555) for info. We are also contactable via the WV1 SC Facebook page.

WORCESTERSHIRE

CHEQUERED PAST SC

Chequered Past Scooter Club, Worcester. Chris 07948 031547 or find us on Facebook.

NATIONAL SCOOTER CLUBS

LUNA OWNERS CLUB

Do you own a Lui, Vega or Cometa? If you do, then why not email lunaownersclub@hotmail.com and send your machine details.

NEW UNTOUCHABLES

21st century Modernism and 60s Mod culture. Visit www.newuntouchables.com for more information.

VESPA CLUB OF BRITAIN

We invite all Vespa, Piaggio and Gilera scooter owners to come along to our meetings and join us; also to become World Vespa Club members through the Vespa Club of Britain. Info available at www.vespaclubofbritain.co.uk (World Vespa Club website: www.vespaworldclub.com)

VETERAN VESPA CLUB

Catering for all classic Vespa scooter enthusiasts in and around the UK. For further information about the club, email us at: wcmembership@veteranvespaclub.com or visit www.veteranvespaclub.com

ZUNDAPP BELLA ENTHUSIASTS CLUB

Own a Zundapp Bella? Join our group of like-minded enthusiasts and share advice, tips and event news with fellow Zundapp scooter owners. For further information email biancerook@blueyonder.co.uk or call 01772 516924. Alternatively, visit our website: www.zundapp-bella.org/zbec

UK NATIONAL SCOOTER-RELATED ORGANISATIONS

BSSO

The British Scooter Sports Association runs events throughout the UK for all scooterists – auto, classic, solo or sidecar. There are events for both off-road scootacross and high-speed racing at many of the UK's best-known circuits.

Visit www.scooterracing.org.uk for info.

HEINKEL CLUB

Heinkel Club – Tourist scooter help, advice wanted or given. Rallies, parts, magazines wanted. Website www.heinkel-trojan-club.co.uk or phone 01482 806405.

MODS OF YOUR GENERATION

Original Mods, revivalists, and young people discovering 'the scene' today #ModsOfYourGeneration. Keep up to date with what happened and what's happening on the scene today, yesterday and tomorrow. Find us online by typing #ModsOfYourGeneration or <https://facebook.com/modsofyourgeneration>

VFM

An organisation of active scooterists dedicated to keeping scootering alive around the world. Email vfmsscot2@aol.com or visit www.vfmsscot.co.uk for further info.

OVERSEAS SCOOTER CLUBS

AUSTRALIA

LAMBRETTA CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

Australia's official and internationally recognised Lambretta club, with scooter riding members from every state and territory. Benefits include club vendor scheme, quarterly newsletter, internet forum and Lambretta advice. For further information, visit www.lambrettaclubaustralia.com or contact Max Box (president) – max_invincible@hotmail.com or Mark Williamson (secretary) – mark.avilliamson@yahoo.com

BRISBANE CANE TOADS SC

(est 1999) Meets on the second Saturday of every month at Grand Central Hotel, Ann Street, Brisbane, QLD from 3pm. On-street parking outside. Everyone is welcome. Contact Laura @ laurajwilliams2001@yahoo.com.au or via Facebook: Brisbane Cane Toads Scooter Club

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